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2025

PRESEASON 1
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PRESEASON 3
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WEEK 1
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WEEK 2
9/14
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WEEK 7
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8:15 PM | MNF

WEEK 18
TBD

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ATLANTA FALCONS

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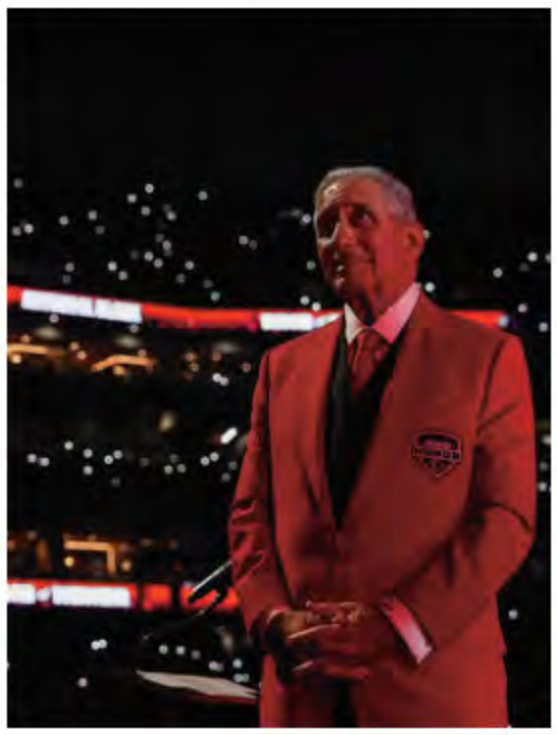
OWNER

ARTHUR M. BLANK
OWNER AND CHAIRMAN

Perhaps best known as co-founder of The Home Depot, Arthur Blank is now widely recognized for his diverse businesses. Recipient of the 2024 Sports Business Journal's Lifetime Achievement Award for his immense industry impact and named by ESPN as the 2021 Sports Philanthropist of the Year, Blank is a tireless advocate of using purpose and profit hand-in-hand to benefit the communities around him.



Blank has been distinguished by Forbes as one of the World's 100 Greatest Living Business Minds 2017, Sports Business Journal's Executive of the Year 2018 and Sports Business Journal's one of the 50 Most Influential People in Sports 2016, 2017, 2018.

In addition to the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, Blank's portfolio of businesses includes the Atlanta Falcons and Atlanta United; PGA TOUR Superstore; Mountain Sky Guest Ranch, West Creek Ranch and Paradise Valley Ranch; Atlanta Drive GC; and Mercedes-Benz Stadium, host of the 2019 Super Bowl.

In 2024, Blank was enshrined as the 13th member of the Atlanta Falcons Ring of Honor. Blank has made his mark as a renowned steward of the franchise. As a leadership voice in the incredible growth of the NFL over the last two decades, Blank has also championed using the Falcons and NFL platforms to grow youth football, support America's military and build community in Atlanta.

Since 1995, the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation has granted more than $1.3 billion, investing in education, parks and green space, youth development and community redevelopment. The Foundation also leads giving programs for all the for-profit businesses within the Blank Family of Businesses portfolio.

A native of Queens, N.Y., Blank received a B.S. Degree in Business Administration with Distinction from Babson College.

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EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

RICH MCKAY
CEO - AMBSE

Chief Executive Officer of AMBSE, Rich McKay, has been a fixture in the National Football League for more than 30 years. One of the League's most influential executives, McKay joined the Atlanta Falcons in 2004. During McKay's tenure, the Falcons have been to the playoffs seven times, been to three NFC Championship games and participated in Super Bowl LI. McKay was hired by Owner and Chairman Arthur M. Blank in 2004 and served his first four years as the team's general manager. He was promoted to president and chief executive officer in 2011. That same year, national columnist and creator of Monday Morning Quarterback (MMQB), Peter King, named McKay number 10 out of the 100 most influential people in the NFL. In 2019,

The Athletic put McKay in The NFL's 100 most influential business people of all-time and in December of 2023, McKay received the Atlanta Sports Council's Lifetime Achievement Award. McKay was announced as one of 25 candidates in The Pro Football Hall of Fame's contributor category for the Class of 2025 on Oct. 16, 2024.

McKay transitioned to his latest role in January, 2024. As CEO of AMBSE, McKay oversees the business operations of the Atlanta Falcons, Atlanta United, Mercedes-Benz Stadium and the shared services functions that support the entire AMBSE portfolio. AMBSE President Tim Zulawski, Falcons President Greg Beadles and United CEO Garth Lagerwey, as well as senior leaders of AMBSE's shared services, report to him.

McKay played a central role in the development, opening and operation of Mercedes-Benz Stadium in addition to his Falcons duties. With the stadium built and operating with a best-in-class leadership team, led by then-AMBSE CEO Steve Cannon, McKay returned his focus to a larger role in the operation of the Falcons. He led the 2021 search that resulted in Arthur Smith being named the Falcons' 18th head coach and Terry Fontenot being named the organization's 11th general manager.

McKay was the point person in the negotiation, development and building of Mercedes-Benz Stadium, a process that began in earnest in 2008. Working closely with Blank, the city of Atlanta, the state of Georgia and the Georgia World Congress Center Authority, McKay helped to secure approval and financing for Mercedes-Benz Stadium and created a true public-private partnership. The club broke ground on Mercedes-Benz Stadium on May 19, 2014, and it was completed in August of 2017 and serves as the home of the Atlanta Falcons and Atlanta United. He is the only executive to have led two successful stadium negotiations (Atlanta and Tampa Bay). In April of 2014, McKay was named President of AMB Sports & Entertainment (AMBSE) which oversees the Falcons, Atlanta United and Mercedes-Benz Stadium.

McKay has served as a member of the NFL's Competition Committee since 1994, which is longer than any member has ever served since the committee's inception in 1968. He has led the committee as co-chairman (1998-2011) or chairman (2011-current) since 1998. The committee is comprised of NFL head coaches and League executives who study the game and recommend rule changes and modifications to ensure player safety while promoting competitiveness. The Competition Committee has recommended and passed over fifty (50) player safety rules changes since 2002. In addition to his commitment to advancing the game, McKay has been involved in the negotiation of collective bargaining agreements with the National Football League Players Association and was highly involved in the negotiations that led to the ten year collective bargaining agreement signed in 2011 and the newest ten year agreement that was executed in 2021.

Prior to joining the Falcons, McKay spent 10 years with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, serving as general manager. While serving as general manager for Tampa Bay (1994-2003) and Atlanta (2004-2008), McKay was the architect of a Super Bowl winning team (Super Bowl XXXVII) as well as six teams that reached the playoffs and three that advanced to the NFC Championship game. During his 15 seasons in the General Manager role, his teams compiled an overall record of 112-96 with a playoff record of 6-5. As a GM, McKay worked with three different NFL head coaches who have guided their respective teams to NFC Championship games – Tony Dungy in 1999 with Tampa Bay, Jon Gruden in 2002 with Tampa Bay and Jim Mora in 2004 with Atlanta.

McKay's personnel scouting acumen was a successful formula which produced 59 players that played in the Pro Bowl during his time as an NFL General Manager. McKay showed his eye for talent when he drafted eight players in the 1997 draft class that went on to play a combined 1,175 games, with 772 starts over their careers. Those players helped contribute to Tampa Bay's 41 Pro Bowl selections between 1997 through 2002, which were the most in the NFL. To put it into perspective, the Buccaneers only had 19 Pro Bowl selections in the first 21 years of their history leading up to 1997.

One of McKay's proudest accomplishments is that 11 of his former lieutenants have risen through the ranks to sit in the general manager's chair at other NFL franchises.

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EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

While many of the players McKay drafted developed into Pro Bowl performers on the field, several have been stars in their community. Atlanta Falcons Limited Partner Warrick Dunn, whom McKay drafted in 1997 with Tampa Bay, was the recipient of the 2004 Walter Payton/NFL Man of the Year award. This award is presented annually to the NFL's most philanthropic player. Derrick Brooks, who was also a draft selection of McKay's, was also a co-recipient of the award in 2000.

The McKay family is one of the most successful football families with substantial roots in both the collegiate and professional game. Rich's late father, the legendary John McKay, led the University of Southern California Trojans to four national championships in 16 seasons. In 2019, ESPN ran a list of the 150 greatest teams in college football's 150-year history and McKay had four of the top 70 teams and the 3rd ranked team of all time.

Rich's older brother J.K. McKay, was a starting wide receiver for the Trojans and part of two national championship teams (1972 & 1974) in addition to playing in three Rose Bowl games while playing for his father. The third generation of McKay's in the football business won a Super Bowl in 2021. Rich's son, John, is the Director of Pro Scouting for the Super Bowl Champion Los Angeles Rams. Between the four McKay's, they have won six national championships, participated as a player or coach in 12 Rose Bowls, participated as a coach, player or team executive in seven NFL conference championship games, won two National Collegiate Coach of the Year Awards, won one XFL Championship as a general manager, and won one Super Bowl as a general manager and one as a Director of Pro Personnel.

Both Coach McKay and Rich McKay saw their first draft picks selected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Lee Roy Selmon was the first pick for John McKay as a head coach of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in 1976 while Warren Sapp was the first pick for Rich McKay in 1995. After the enshrinement of Sapp and Derrick Brooks, Rich McKay became the first and only general manager in NFL history to have his first two draft picks go on to be first-ballot members of the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Another first, McKay's first head coach hire, Dungy, was named to the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2016 while Ronde Barber became the third player drafted by McKay in Tampa to be inducted in 2023.

McKay earned his bachelor's degree in Economics in 1981 from Princeton University, graduated from Stetson's College of Law in 1984, clerked for two years for Tampa's U.S. District Judge William Terrell Hodges, and was inducted into the Stetson Law Hall of Fame on November 2014. McKay worked at the Tampa law firm of Hill, Ward, and Henderson, P.A., from 1986-1992 where he served as General Counsel for the Buccaneers. Born March 16, 1959, in Eugene, Oregon, McKay grew up in Los Angeles and Tampa, graduating from Tampa's Jesuit High School.

As an avid long-distance runner, Rich has participated in and finished six marathons including two New York City Marathons, an Atlanta Marathon, and the Los Angeles in Marathon in 2013 and in 2016, and the 2019 San Diego marathon.

McKay and his wife, Terrin, have two sons; Hunter, a 2012 graduate of Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama who is employed in the Sports Information Office at Kennesaw State University in Kennesaw, Ga., and John, a 2015 graduate of the University of Southern California is the director of pro scouting for the Los Angeles Rams.

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EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

GREG BEADLES
PRESIDENT

Having started with the Atlanta Falcons as an intern after earning a bachelor's degree from Louisiana State University and master's degree from Georgia State University, Beadles began his 29th year (2023) with the club being named president of the team. In his almost three decades with the organization, Beadles has held numerous roles with the Falcons and AMBSE, including being part of the finance team that orchestrated the transfer of ownership of the Falcons from the Rankin Smith family to Arthur M. Blank in 2001. Known league wide as an expert in team and facility operations and finance, Beadles has built unique trust among his peers, colleagues and Blank himself on the strength of his financial acumen, business savvy, versatility and personal values.

A two-time CFO of the Year (Atlanta Business Chronicle), Beadles has provided leadership across AMBSE in business strategy, finance, technology, facility development and operations, and data and analytics. Working closely with Rich McKay, Beadles played a lead role in every aspect of developing, financing, design and construction of Mercedes-Benz Stadium.

Since MBS opened in 2017, Beadles has led several functions that have allowed MBS to meet Blank's vision as a best-in-class fan experience venue for sports, entertainment and private events. He also played a central role in the organization's acquisition of an MLS expansion team that would become Atlanta United, and concepting and developing AMBSE into one of the leading multi-property sports and entertainment companies. Outside of his professional roles, Beadles is a board member of the College Football Hall of Fame; is co-founding board chair of both the Oak Hill Classical School in Dacula, Ga., and the Arete Scholars Fund, a non-profit that has awarded academic scholarships to 15,000 low-income children since 2010.

As Atlanta Falcons president, Beadles reports to AMBSE and Atlanta Falcons CEO Rich McKay and assumes day-to-day oversight of finance, operations, marketing, digital, communications, human resources and community relations, as well as shared functions related to game presentation, retail, sales, and service. Beadles' father spent over 50 years as a basketball coach and athletic director, mostly in Georgia, so his career, passion for the state, and ties to the Falcons are deeply rooted. Beadles, his wife Jill, and their children (Ella, Grant, Evie, and Hudson) reside in metro Atlanta.

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GENERAL MANAGER

TERRY FONTENOT
GENERAL MANAGER

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 5
SEASONS IN NFL: 23

Terry Fontenot was named general manager of the Atlanta Falcons on Jan. 19, 2021.

Fontenot joined the Falcons after spending the previous 18 seasons as a member of the New Orleans Saints organization. He worked his way through the organization's ranks, starting out as a marketing intern before switching to the scouting department and climbing the ladder from intern to pro scout, and eventually advancing to vice president/assistant general manager of pro personnel.

Atlanta finished with an 8-9 record overall in 2024 and a 4-2 record in the NFC South, with 12 of the Falcons 17 games decided by one score. Atlanta's 2022 (WR Drake London), 2023 (RB Bijan Robinson) and 2024 (QB Michael Penix Jr.) first-round draft picks combined to make the Falcons the first team in NFL history with a 300-yard passer, 175-yard receiver and 150-yard rusher each under the age of 25 in the same game (Week 18). Robinson earned his first Pro Bowl invitation in 2023, with Atlanta totaling three Pro Bowlers for 2024 (Chris Lindstrom and KhaDarel Hodge).

First-round selection Michael Penix Jr. started three games in his rookie season, securing a 34-7 win over the New York Giants in his first career start. In his second-career start in Week 17 at Washington, he threw his first NFL touchdown pass on fourth down with 1:23 remaining in the fourth quarter, with the following extra point tying the game at 24 and leading to overtime. In his sophomore season, Robinson finished the season third in the NFL in rushing yards (1,456), fifth in rushing touchdowns (14) and fifth in receiving yards (431), among running backs, making his first Pro Bowl appearance.

In his third season, London earned his first career 1,000-yard receiving season, finishing fourth in the NFL in receiving yards (1,271). The third-year wideout also pulled in 100 receptions for his first 100-reception season, leading the team in receptions, receiving yards and receiving touchdowns (nine). London became just the third player in Atlanta history with at least 100 receptions, 1,200 yards and nine touchdowns in a season, joining Roddy White (2010) and Terance Mathis (1994), while setting the franchise record for the most receptions in a player's first three years with 241

On the defensive side of the ball, 2023 free agent addition ILB Kaden Elliss had a breakout 2024 campaign, becoming one of only three players since 2000, and the first in Falcons history, to total 150 tackles (151), and five-or-more sacks in a single season. Fellow 2023 free agent addition Jessie Bates III was the only player in the league in 2024 to have four forced fumbles and four interceptions, also becoming the sixth player in Falcons history to record multiple pick-sixes in a career. Additionally, cornerback A.J. Terrell Jr. signed an extension in the 2024 offseason before tying for the second-least receptions allowed in man coverage (10) among players with at least 103 coverage snaps. A 2022 second-round selection, Arnold Ebiketie recorded the fifth-most sacks in the NFL over the final six weeks of the season, totaling five sacks in Weeks 13-18

In 2023, the Falcons finished with a 7-10 record, with the offense eclipsing 400 total yards of offense on six occasions, tied for the fourth-most games by a Falcons offense all-time. Atlanta's 2023 first-round selection, Robinson, set a franchise record for the most yards from scrimmage by a rookie with 1,463, surpassing William Andrews (1,332 yards in 1979). He also led all rookies in carries (214) and rushing yards (976) in 2023.

In 2022, Atlanta finished with a 7-10 record, winning six games at Mercedes-Benz Stadium - the most since the stadium opened in 2017. The Falcons led the NFL in fewest penalties, finished third in the league in rushing yards per game and 10th in third-down conversion rate. Atlanta also had the third-highest successful play rate on rushing attempts, based on EPA, at 45.1 percent.

Atlanta's rushing attack averaged 74.5 more rushing yards per game in 2022 than it did in 2021, resulting in the largest one-season improvement by any team since at least 2001. With Cordarrelle Patterson (340), Tyler Allgeier (324), Marcus Mariota (280) and Caleb Huntley (265), the Falcons became the first team to have four players with at least 250 rushing yards through the first eight games of a season in NFL history. Additionally, Allgeier surpassed Andrews (1,023 in 1979) for the most rushing yards by a rookie in franchise history and became the sixth rookie in the NFL, selected in the fifth round-or-later, to eclipse 1,000 rushing yards over the past 20 seasons. Patterson also set single-season career highs for rushing yards (695) and rushing touchdowns (eight).

London finished his rookie season with 72 receptions for 866 yards and four touchdowns, surpassing Kyle Pitts (68 in 2021) for the most receptions by a rookie in franchise history. With Allgeier (1,035 rushing yards) and London (866 receiving yards), the 2022 Atlanta Falcons became the fourth team to have a 1,000-yard rookie rusher and an 800-yard rookie receiver in the same season in NFL history, joining the 2010 Tampa Bay Buccaneers, 2004 Detroit Lions and 2003 Houston Texans.

Defensively, in addition to leading the league in fewest defensive penalties per game (1.06), Atlanta's defense limited opponents to the second-fewest second half points per game, allowing only 7.9 points per game after halftime.

In his first year, the Falcons posted a 7-10 record, winning seven of nine games decided by one possession after winning two of 10 such games the season prior. Patterson set single-season then-career highs for rushing yards (618), receiving yards (548), rushing touchdowns (six) and receiving touchdowns (five), and became the first player to record at least five rushing and five receiving touchdowns in a single season in franchise history.

Additionally, Pitts became the second rookie tight end to surpass 1,000 receiving yards in NFL history, joining Pro Football Hall of Famer Mike Ditka (1,076 yards in 1961). Pitts broke the single-season franchise record for most receiving yards by a tight end with 1,026, surpassing Pro Football Hall of Famer Tony Gonzalez (930 in 2012), and set the record for most receiving yards by a rookie regardless of position, surpassing Julio Jones (959 in 2011). Pitts also became the first rookie tight end to be selected to the Pro Bowl since New York's Jeremy Shockey in 2002.

In New Orleans, Fontenot served as a close confidant for general manager Mickey Loomis and managed the pro personnel department include player acquisitions and evaluating players. With Fontenot leading the pro personnel department, the Saints showed a keen eye for adding impact players through free agency.

Although he spent much of his career on the pro scouting side, serving as a pro scouting intern, player personnel assistant and pro scout before his promotion to director of pro scouting, Fontenot saw his role expand in scope starting in 2015. After Ryan Pace was hired as the general manager of the Chicago Bears, Fontenot began working closely with college scouting director, and former Dolphins GM, Jeff Ireland, Loomis and head coach Sean Payton to develop a versatile group that could identify players that fit the team's vision, whether they were on NFL rosters, practice squads, free agents, college players or otherwise.

Free agents who signed with the Saints from 2015-2020 that went on to earn Pro Bowl honors included tight end Jared Cook, linebacker Demario Davis, kicker Wil Lutz and guard Larry Warford, along with center Max Unger who the Saints acquired in a trade with Seattle.

In 2012, Fontenot attended the Stanford Business School's Executive Education NFL-Stanford Program for Managers, an education program and honor known across the league as training ground for promising executives.

A native of Lake Charles, La., he was an all-state defensive back at Lagrange High School. A four-year letterman at safety for Tulane (1999-2002), Fontenot served as a team captain in 2001 and was a member of the 2002 team that won the Hawaii Bowl. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in business and organizational information technology.

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RAHEEM MORRIS
HEAD COACH

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 8
SEASONS IN NFL: 24

Raheem Morris was named the 19th head coach in Atlanta Falcons history on Jan. 25, 2024. He took over the club after spending three seasons (2021-23) as defensive coordinator for the Los Angeles Rams. During his tenure with the Rams, Los Angeles made two postseason appearances and captured a title in Super Bowl LVI.

In his first season with the Falcons, Morris finished with a 4-2 record against NFC South opponents. Atlanta finished sixth in offensive yards per game (369.8), fifth in passing yards per game (239.3) and 10th in rushing yards per game (130.5). The Falcons recorded 550 yards of total offense in the Week 5 win over the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, the sixth-highest total in 2024. Defensively, the Falcons finished the season third in opponent plays of 20-or-more yards, allowing just 52 (eight rushing, 44 passing) throughout the season. Running back Bijan Robinson and special teamer KhaDarel Hodge both were elected to their first-career Pro Bowls after the 2024 season, while guard Chris Lindstrom was elected to his third consecutive (2022-24).

Drake London, Robinson and Michael Penix Jr. combined to make the Falcons the first team in NFL history with a 300-yard passer, 175-yard receiver and 150-yard rusher each under the age of 25 in the same game (Week 18).

In his sophomore season, Robinson finished the season third in the NFL in rushing yards (1,456), fifth in rushing touchdowns (14) and fifth in receiving yards (431), among running backs, making his first Pro Bowl appearance.

In his third season, London earned his first career 1,000-yard receiving season, finishing fourth in the NFL in receiving yards (1,271). The third-year wideout also pulled in 100 receptions for his first 100-reception season, leading the team in receptions, receiving yards and receiving touchdowns (nine). London became just the third player in Atlanta history with at least 100 receptions, 1,200 yards and nine touchdowns in a season, joining Roddy White (2010) and Terance Mathis (1994), while setting the franchise record for the most receptions in a player's first three years with 241.

On the defensive side of the ball, Kaden Elliss had a breakout 2024 campaign, becoming one of only three players since 2000, and the first in Falcons history, to total 150 tackles (151), and five-or-more sacks in a single season. Safety Jessie Bates III was the only player in the league to have four forced fumbles and four interceptions, also becoming the sixth player in Falcons history to record multiple pick-sixes in a career. Additionally, cornerback A.J. Terrell Jr. tied for the second-least receptions allowed in man coverage (10) among players with at least 103 coverage snaps. OLB Arnold Ebiketie recorded the fifth-most sacks in the NFL over final six weeks of the season, totaling five sacks in Weeks 13-18.

Over his three seasons with the Rams, Los Angeles' defense recorded the fourth-best red zone efficiency rating and the seventh-fewest rushing yards per game in the NFL. His 2023 unit was one of the youngest in the NFL but helped the Rams earn a playoff berth and featured third-round rookie defensive linemen Kobie Turner, a finalist for the AP Defensive Rookie of the Year award. Turner and Byron Young tallied a combined 17 sacks, finishing first and second among all rookies. Turner's nine sacks matched three-time NFL Defensive Player of the Year Aaron Donald's franchise rookie record (nine in 2014), while Young's eight sacks ranked third among rookies in franchise history.

In 2022, Morris led a Rams defense that led the NFL in red zone efficiency (44.4 percent), ranked second in goal-to-go efficiency (53.3 percent), seventh in interceptions (16) and ninth in defensive total rush EPA (42.97). During the 2021 season that culminated in a Super Bowl title, Los Angeles' defense averaged 1.5 takeaways per game and featured three players – Donald, Leonard Floyd and Von Miller – ranked in the top 20 in sacks. Additionally, Morris' unit ranked third in sacks (50) and fifth in tackles for loss (85) during the regular season.

Additionally in 2021, the Rams defense ranked sixth in the NFL in opponents rushing yards per game (103.2) and fifth in yards per rush (3.96). Morris' unit held opponents to a 51.8 percent red zone efficiency rate, which ranked eighth. Morris also led a secondary that ranked fifth in opponent passer rating (83.8) and third in interceptions (19). The secondary finished second in the NFL with 17 opponent passing touchdowns allowed and a 0.89 opponent touchdown-to-interception ratio.

Prior to Los Angeles, Morris spent six seasons (2015-20) with the Falcons in a variety of roles including assistant head coach/passing game coordinator (2015, 2017-18), assistant head coach/wide receivers (2016), assistant head coach/wide receivers/secondary (2019) and defensive coordinator (2020) before serving as Atlanta's interim head coach for the final 12 weeks of the 2020 season. Under the guidance of Morris, the Falcons finished 2020 tied for sixth in the league in red zone defense (82.1 percent) and sixth in rush defense (104.8 yards per game).

Morris began the 2019 season focused on the receiving corps but turned his attention to the secondary after the week nine bye week. Over the final eight games, the team went 6-2 and the defense improved from the lowest number of takeaways in the first half of the season (4) to finishing with the second most in the NFL (16) over the second half of the season. The defense also vaulted from the bottom of the league rankings to the top 10 in sacks (32nd to 10th), scoring efficiency (32nd to 9th) and red zone efficiency (31st to 6th) over the final eight weeks of the season.

In 2018, Morris' coaching played a part in helping the offense average 290.8 passing yards per game, the fourth-best average in the league. The passing attack continued to improve from 2017 to 2018, with the offense averaging 50 more passing yards per game and totaling 15 more passing touchdowns than in the previous year. Under Morris' guidance, first-round draft pick Calvin Ridley led all rookies in receiving yards (821) and touchdowns (10). He also oversaw another great year from seven-time Pro Bowler, Julio Jones. Jones recorded 1,677 receiving yards, the second-highest total in his career, and hauled in 113 passes, the third

HEAD COACH

time in his career with 100+ receptions in a season.

During Morris' second year as the wide receivers coach in 2017, his receivers pulled in 214 receptions for 2,848 yards and 13 touchdowns. Morris' coaching played a hand in Mohamed Sanu topping his then career-high for receptions, a mark he set the previous year under Morris' teaching. Sanu finished the year with 67 receptions for 703 yards and tied a career-high with five touchdown receptions. Morris also oversaw another impressive year from Jones, who was selected to go to his fourth straight Pro Bowl after hauling in 88 receptions for 1,444 yards and three touchdowns.

After spending his first season with the team as assistant head coach/defensive passing game coordinator, Morris transitioned to the offensive side of the ball in 2016 and was named the assistant head coach/wide receivers coach. In his first season coaching the wide receivers, Morris worked with one of the best receivers in the game in Jones. Jones recorded 1,409 receiving yards, which was second in the NFL that season while his entire receiving group teamed up for 223 catches for 3,226 yards and 22 touchdowns. The unit included Taylor Gabriel, who recorded a career-high six receiving touchdowns and Sanu who tallied a then career-high 59 receptions.

During Morris' first year in Atlanta, he was named the assistant head coach/defensive passing game coordinator. The defense only allowed 19 passing touchdowns, which was tied for the third-lowest total in the NFL while recording 15 interceptions, which ranked within the top 10 in the league. The numbers gave the defense a 1.27 touchdown-to-interception ratio, the seventh-best TD/Int ratio in 2015.

Morris joined the Falcons after spending three seasons as defensive backs coach for the Washington Commanders. In 2012, he helped Washington's defense finish tied for fifth in the NFL with 31 takeaways and tie a league high with 94 passes defensed. Washington scored four defensive touchdowns in 2012, including two from the secondary.

Prior to arriving in Washington, Morris spent three seasons as the head coach of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers from 2009-2011. He was the league's youngest head coach in 2009 and in 2010, as his team finished with a 10-6 record. The Buccaneers made their best turnaround in franchise history in 2010 after going 3-13 in 2009.

Morris served in multiple capacities with the Buccaneers during two different stints with the team before he was promoted to head coach. He spent two seasons as the team's defensive backs coach from 2007-08, during which time the Buccaneers ranked second in the NFL allowing 170.5 passing yards per game. During that span, the Buccaneers ranked among the league leaders with 22 interceptions.

He spent one year as the defensive coordinator at Kansas State in 2006, where he helped seven Wildcats earn All-Big 12 honors. Morris' unit featured two first-team All-Big 12 selections and one second-team honoree.

Morris made his NFL coaching debut with Tampa Bay as a defensive quality control coach in 2002, when the club won Super Bowl XXXVII. The Buccaneers defense allowed an NFL-low 12.3 points per game, the third-best scoring defense since 2000. He served as a defensive assistant with the Bucs in 2003 and as assistant defensive backs coach from 2004-05.

In nine seasons in Tampa Bay, the Buccaneers finished fifth in total defense five times, while leading the League in 2002 and 2005. He also helped the team finish as the top-rated pass defense three times (2002, 2004 & 2007).

Morris began his collegiate coaching career as an assistant coach at Hofstra in 1998. He moved on to Cornell University as defensive backs coach and special teams assistant for the 1999 season. Morris served as defensive backs coach at Hofstra from 2000 to 2001 before joining the Buccaneers. He also held a defensive minority internship position with the New York Jets in the fall of 2001.

Morris played safety at Hofstra from 1994-97 and received his Bachelor of Science degree in physical education.

MORRIS' COACHING BACKGROUND

2024-Present	Head Coach | Atlanta Falcons
2021-23	Defensive Coordinator | Los Angeles Rams
2020	Interim Head Coach | Atlanta Falcons
2020	Defensive Coordinator | Atlanta Falcons
2019	Asst. Head Coach/Wide Receivers | Atlanta Falcons
2018	Asst. Head Coach/Passing Game Coord. | Atlanta Falcons
2017	Asst. Head Coach/Passing Game Coord./WRs | Atlanta Falcons
2016	Asst. Head Coach/Wide Receivers | Atlanta Falcons
2015	Asst. Head Coach/Defensive Passing Game Coord. | Atlanta Falcons
2012-14	Defensive Backs | Washington Commanders
2009-11	Head Coach | Tampa Bay Buccaneers
2007-08	Defensive Backs | Tampa Bay Buccaneers
2006	Defensive Coordinator | Kansas State
2004-05	Asst. Defensive Backs Coach | Tampa Bay Buccaneers
2003	Defensive Assistant | Tampa Bay Buccaneers
2002	Defensive Quality Control | Tampa Bay Buccaneers
2001	Defensive Minority Intern | New York Jets
2000-01	Defensive Backs | Hofstra
1999	Defensive Backs/Special Teams Asst. | Cornell
1998	Graduate Assistant | Hofstra

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COACHING STAFF

ZAC ROBINSON
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 2
SEASONS IN NFL: 7

Zac Robinson was named Atlanta Falcons offensive coordinator on Jan. 29, 2024.

In his first season as the offensive coordinator in 2024, Atlanta's offense ranked sixth in the league with 369.8 yards per game, fifth in passing yards per game (239.3) and 10th in rushing yards per game (130.5). Atlanta posted a top-10 rushing attack for the third consecutive season and eclipsed 100 yards in 12 games, including a 227-yard rushing game in Week 18 vs. Carolina. Second-year running back Bijan Robinson had a breakout campaign, with a career-high 304 rushes for 1,456 yards and 14 rushing touchdowns, in addition to 61 receptions for 431 yards and one touchdown. In the Week 5 overtime win against Tampa Bay, the Falcons' 550 total yards of offense, 477 passing and 73 rushing, marked a season best and the most since Week 15 of the 2016 season against the San Francisco 49ers (550 yards). Additionally, quarterback Kirk Cousins hit franchise records in both completions (42) and passing yards (509). In Week 18, the Falcons became the first team in NFL history with a 300-yard passer, 175-yard receiver and 150-yard rusher each under the age of 25 in the same game. Quarterback Michael Penix Jr. (24) threw for 312 yards, wide receiver Drake London (23) totaled 187 receiving yards and Robinson rushed for 170 yards vs. Carolina. London ranked fourth in the NFL with 1,271 receiving yards while ranking ninth in receptions (100) and touchdown receptions (nine).

Robinson was elected to his first-career Pro Bowl after the 2024 season, while guard Chris Lindstrom was elected to his third consecutive (2022-24).

Robinson arrived in Atlanta after spending five seasons (2019-23) with the Los Angeles Rams, where he served in a variety of roles, including quarterbacks/passing game coordinator (2022-23), assistant quarterbacks coach (2019; 2021) and assistant wide receivers coach (2020).

In 2023, Rams quarterback Matthew Stafford completed 326-of-521 attempts (62.6 percent) for 3,965 yards, 24 touchdowns and 11 interceptions for a 92.5 passer rating and earned Pro Bowl honors for the second time in his career. Stafford ranked in the top 12 among quarterbacks in completions, passing yards and touchdown passes.

With Robinson as passing game coordinator, Rams wide receiver Puka Nacua recorded the most receptions (105) and receiving yards (1,486) by a rookie in NFL history, earning second-team AP All-Pro and Pro Bowl honors. Nacua also set the NFL record for most receiving yards by a rookie in a playoff game in NFL history with 181 yards against Detroit.

In 2022, the Rams started four different quarterbacks due to injury; however, Stafford completed a career-high 68 percent of his passes before being sidelined. Robinson was instrumental in onboarding mid-season acquisition Baker Mayfield, who led the Rams on a game-winning drive against the Raiders despite joining the team only two days prior. Under Robinson's tutelage, Mayfield completed 82-of-129 passes for 850 yards and four touchdowns in five games for Los Angeles.

Robinson served as assistant quarterbacks coach in 2021, working with the newly acquired Stafford, who finished the season ranked in the top five in passing yards (4,886), passing first downs (233), yards per attempt (8.13) and touchdown passes (41), matching his career high. Los Angeles' passing attack completed the third-most completions of more than 20 yards in the NFL with 65 en route to a victory in Super Bowl LVI.

In 2020, with Robinson serving as assistant wide receivers coach, Rams wide receivers Cooper Kupp and Robert Woods led the team with 974 and 936 receiving yards, respectively. Los Angeles' offense finished 11th in total yards per game (377) and 13th in passing yards per game (250.9).

Robinson began his NFL coaching career as assistant quarterbacks coach for the Rams in 2019. He was influential in the continued growth of quarterback Jared Goff, who became the first quarterback in franchise history to pass for more than 4,000 yards in consecutive seasons.

Prior to joining the Rams, Robinson began giving instruction to college and NFL quarterbacks in 2014. He also served as a senior analyst for Pro Football Focus where he was one of the site's primary pro and college quarterback evaluators dating back to 2016.

Robinson was originally selected by the New England Patriots in the seventh round (250th overall) of the 2010 NFL Draft. In addition to New England, he also spent time with the Seattle Seahawks, Detroit Lions and Cincinnati Bengals.

As a three-year starting quarterback at Oklahoma State, Robinson finished his collegiate career among the all-time offensive leaders in program history, compiling 8,317 passing yards and 88 total touchdowns, including 66 through the air.

A native of Littleton, Colo., he was named an All-Colorado selection at quarterback while competing in both football and track at Chatfield Senior High School. Robinson and his wife, Mia, have a daughter, Madi, and a son, Cooper.

ROBINSON'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2024-Present	Offensive Coordinator | Atlanta Falcons
2022-23	Quarterbacks/Pass Game Coordinator | Los Angeles Rams
2021	Assistant Quarterbacks | Los Angeles Rams
2020	Assistant Wide Receivers | Los Angeles Rams
2019	Assistant Quarterbacks | Los Angeles Rams

JEFF ULBRICH
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 7
SEASONS IN NFL: 13

Ulbrich was named Atlanta Falcons defensive coordinator on Jan. 18, 2025.

Ulbrich comes to Atlanta after spending four seasons (2021-24) with the New York Jets, where he most recently served as interim head coach during the end of the 2024 season after three years as the defensive coordinator.

Calling the Jets defense in 2022-24, Ulbrich's unit was the only defense in the league to rank in the top five of total defense in each of the last three seasons, finishing fourth in 2022 before finishing third in both 2023 and 2024. In the last three seasons combined, Ulbrich's defense ranked No. 1 in total defense (305.7 yards per game), No. 1 in passing defense (183.5 yards per game), No. 5 in tackles for loss (269), No. 8 in sacks (136) and No. 9 in scoring defense (21.1 points per game).

Under Ulbrich's tutelage, cornerback Sauce Gardner earned first-team All-Pro accolades and became the first cornerback since the merger to be named first-team All-Pro in each of his first two seasons (2022-23), while also being selected as a Pro Bowl starter in each of his first two seasons. Additionally, Ulbrich aided linebacker Quincy Williams to earn first-team All Pro and Team MVP honors in 2023, linebacker Jermaine Johnson earn Pro Bowl honors in 2023, and former first-round draft selection Quinnen Williams earn first-team All-Pro in 2022 and notch back-to-back Pro Bowl honors (2022-23).

In 2022, Ulbrich's defense was the only unit in the NFL to not allow a 300-yard passer, and allowed an average of just 18.59 points per game, the fourth best in the league. Additionally, the unit only allowed six players to hit 100 rushing or receiving yards in a game, tied for the best in the NFL.

Prior to the Jets, Ulbrich spent six seasons with the Falcons, working with Head Coach Raheem Morris. He began as the team's linebackers coach for his first five seasons (2015-19), adding the title of assistant head coach in 2020. Ulbrich became the team's interim defensive coordinator after Morris' promotion to interim head coach in 2020 for the final 11 games of the season. In those final 11 games, the Falcons ranked in the top third of the league in opponents third-down percentage and opposing red zone touchdown percentage, while also allowing the sixth fewest rushing yards per game.

In his six seasons coaching linebackers in Atlanta, Ulbrich had a linebacker register 90-plus tackles in a season nine times, including by four different players: Deion Jones (four times), De'Vondre Campbell (three), Foyesade Oluokun (one) and Paul Worrilow (one).

Prior to Atlanta, Ulbrich spent three seasons (2012-14) at UCLA. After two seasons (2012-13) as the Bruins' linebackers and special teams coach, adding the title of assistant head coach in Spring 2012, Ulbrich was promoted to defensive coordinator in 2014. In his time with the Bruins, he helped Anthony Barr convert from running back to linebacker before finishing second in the country with 13.5 sacks (2012), Myles Jack earn Pac-12 Defensive and Offensive Freshman of the Year honors (2013), and Eric Kendricks earn both the Butkus Award and Lott IMPACT Trophy after leading the nation in solo tackles per game (2014). All three players were selected in the first or second round of the NFL Draft and both Barr and Kendrick have been selected as Pro Bowlers in the NFL.

Ulbrich began his coaching career with the Seattle Seahawks in 2010, serving as the team's special teams assistant for two seasons (2010-11). During the 2010 season, kicker Olindo Mare matched the sixth-longest field goal streak with 30 straight, while the kickoff return units ranked third in the NFL and the kickoff cover group ranked fifth in the league.

The San Jose, Calif., native was originally selected by San Francisco in the third round (86th overall) of the 2000 NFL Draft out of Hawaii. In 10 seasons with the 49ers, Ulbrich played in 120 regular-season games (75 starts) at linebacker and logged 501 tackles (366 solo), 32 tackles for loss, 5.5 sacks, six forced

ULBRICH'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2025	Defensive Coordinator | Atlanta Falcons
2024	Interim Head Coach | New York Jets
2021-24	Defensive Coordinator | New York Jets
2020	Interim Defensive Coordinator | Atlanta Falcons
2020	Asst. Head Coach/Linebackers | Atlanta Falcons
2015-19	Linebackers Coach | Atlanta Falcons
2014	Defensive Coordinator | UCLA
2012-13	Asst. HC/Linebackers/Special Teams Coach | UCLA
2010-11	Special Teams Assistant | Seattle Seahawks

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fumbles, two fumble recoveries, two interceptions and 13 passes defensed. He also started all three playoff games he appeared in and totaled 18 tackles (12 solo), one pass defense and one fumble recovery.

As a two-year starter at Hawaii, Ulbrich was named All-WAC first team as a senior, leading the conference with a school single-season record 169 tackles, along with serving as the team's co-captain. Prior to Hawaii, he spent a year at Gavilan College (Calif.), where he earned first-team All-Conference and team MVP honors after redshirting at San Jose State as a freshman.

Ulbrich and his wife, Cristina, have a daughter, Samantha, and two sons, Jax and Jace.

MARQUICE WILLIAMS
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 5
SEASONS IN NFL: 10

Marquice Williams was named Atlanta Falcons special teams coordinator on Jan. 21, 2021.

Since joining the staff in 2021, he has helped kicker Younghoe Koo convert on 116-of-137 field goal attempts (84.7 percent), the sixth-best mark in the league in that span. Koo has also made eight game-winning field goals with time expiring, the most in the NFL in that span. Under Williams' guidance, special teamer KhaDarel Hodge was elected to the Pro Bowl in 2024 along with long snapper Josh Harris in 2021, marking the third special teams player to earn Pro Bowl honors along with Koo in 2020. Hodge is the first Falcon to earn Pro Bowl honors as a special teamer for the Falcons since Eric Weems in 2010.

In 2024 under Williams' guidance, Hodge recovered a muffed punt for a touchdown for the Falcons in the first quarter of the Week 4 win over the Saints. It was the first special teams touchdown since Week 11 of the 2022 season against the Chicago Bears, and the only touchdown scored by any punt protection unit in the league during the 2024 season. Hodge earned NFC Special Teams Player of the Week in Week 15 against the Las Vegas Raiders as he recorded his first blocked punt of his career while also tipping a punt, giving the Falcons good field position that led to a Falcons touchdown. Koo connected on 25-of-34 field goal attempts in addition to making a perfect 26-for-26 extra points for a total of 101 points in 2024. In the Week 4 win over the Saints, Koo was perfect on four field goal attempts, including a game-winning 58-yard field goal with :02 remaining in the game, the longest of his career and the then -longest field goal made in Mercedes-Benz Stadium. Defensive lineman Zach Harrison tipped a punt in the Week 6 game against the Carolina Panthers, which led to a Falcons touchdown before halftime. The Falcons stopped opponents on all three fake punts they faced in 2024 in Weeks 8, 9 and 13, the best of any team in the NFL. Since 2000, the Falcons joined the Chicago Bears as one of two teams to stop at least three fake punts in a season and the only team this century to face at least three punts in a season and not allow a conversion.

Punter Bradley Pinion finished the Week 15 game against the Raiders with four punts downed inside the 10-yard line and two inside the five. Finishing with eight total punts downed inside the 10, Pinion was one of three punters to have multiple punts downed inside the five in a single game and one of two players to have four downed inside the 10 in a single game in 2024.

Following the 2024 season, Williams was selected as the Head Coach for the East team of the 2025 East-West Shrine Bowl. Under Williams' leadership, the East team delivered a dominant performance to secure a 25-0 victory over the West. It was Williams' second appearance serving as a head coach for the Shrine Bowl, also serving as the Head Coach for the East Team in 2023.

In 2023, Williams helped Koo connect on 32-of-37 field goal attempts (86.5 percent) in addition to making 27-of-28 extra points for a total of 123 points scored, en route to earning two NFC Special Teams Player of the Week honors (Weeks 7 and 16). With 123 points scored on the season, Koo (591) passed Mick Luckhurst (558) for the third most points scored in franchise history. Under Williams' guidance, Pinion punted 75 times for 3,110 net punting yards, including a long of 66 yards. He notched 11 punts inside the 10-yard line, tied for fifth most in the league. Williams was also a participant in the Ozzie Newsome General Manager Forum and the Quarterback Coaching Summit in 2023. In June of 2024, Williams spoke as a panelist at the quarterback coaching summit that was held in Los Angeles, an event designed for the most promising front office personnel and coaches on the offensive side of the ball, representing the NFL's commitment to developing a diverse and inclusive workforce and providing opportunities for minority candidates. Additionally, Williams was a candidate in the 2024 Coach Accelerator program at the spring league meeting in Nashville, Tenn., which serves as a platform for clubs and owners to engage with qualified coaching candidates from diverse backgrounds. Candidates have the opportunity to build relationships with club owners and executives to further develop and hone their leadership skills.

In 2022, Atlanta was one of two teams to have special teams units score multiple touchdowns during the season – a Lorenzo Carter scoop-and-score off of a blocked punt in Week 2 and a Cordarrelle Patterson 103-yard kickoff return for a touchdown in Week 11. Under Williams' guidance, the Falcons blocked multiple punts (Troy Andersen – Week 2; Richie Grant – Week 17) for the first time in a season since at least 2000. Ade Ogundeji also recorded his second-career blocked field goal in two seasons with Williams, blocking a Justin Tucker field goal in Baltimore in Week 16.

As successful as the punt and field goal rush units were in 2022, Atlanta's returners had a special season as well. Patterson's 103-yard kickoff return for a touchdown was the ninth of his career, setting an NFL record for the most career kickoff return touchdowns in NFL history. Patterson would be named NFC Special Teams Player of the Week in Week 11. Additionally, Avery Williams returned 18 punts for 292 yards and led the NFL with 16.2 yards per punt return in 2022 (min. 15 att.).

Koo closed the 2022 season making 12-of-12 field goal attempts, including three from 50-plus, earning NFC Special Teams Player of the Month for December and January. In four seasons with Williams serving as special teams coordinator, Atlanta has had multiple NFC Special Teams Player of the Month honors.

In Williams' first season with Atlanta in 2021, Koo connected on 27-of-29 field goal attempts and all 30 of his PATs, and led the league with three game-winning field goals in the regular season. Punter Thomas Morstead punted 22 times for 1,015 yards (46.1 avg., 41.0 net avg.), including 11 inside the 20-yard line. Morstead earned NFC Special Teams Player of the Week in Week 12 at Jacksonville and NFC Special Teams Player of the Month for December. Harris recorded a career-high seven special teams tackles, earned second-team AP All-Pro honors and was selected to his first-career Pro Bowl. Under Marquice Williams' tutelage, Avery Williams returned 23 kickoffs for 490 yards (21.3 avg.), 20 punt returns for 153 yards (7.7 avg.) and totaled six special teams tackles, two forced fumbles and two fumble recoveries.

Williams joined the Falcons after spending two seasons (2019-20) with the Detroit Lions, where he served as an assistant special teams coach.

During that time, he helped Jamal Agnew total 1,237 yards on 45 kickoff returns – the fourth-most in the NFL – while averaging 27.5 yards per return and breaking a return 100 yards for a touchdown. Agnew tied for the league lead with two total return touchdowns in 2019. With Williams' assistance, Matt Prater converted 47-of-59 field goal attempts, including 10-of-13 from 50-plus yards with a long kick of 59 yards.

In 2020, under Williams' tutelage, Lions punter Jack Fox recorded the highest gross average (49.1) and net average (44.8) in a punter's first season in NFL history. Additionally, Fox's 44.8 net average was the third highest in a single season in league history. The rookie punter became the first Lions punter to be named to the Pro Bowl since 1988 and earned AP second-team All-Pro honors.

Also in 2020, Matt Prater connected on his 59th-career made field goal of at least 50 yards, surpassing Sebastian Janikowski (58) for the most made field goals of 50-or-more yards in NFL history.

Prior to joining the Lions in 2019, he spent three seasons (2016-18) with the Los Angeles Chargers coaching staff. As a defensive assistant with the Chargers in 2018, Williams assisted the ninth-best defensive unit (333.7 yards per game) in the league and guided rookie safety Derwin James and veteran safety Adrian Phillips to their first-career Pro Bowl.

Williams began his coaching career in 2010 as the linebackers/assistant special teams coach at Winona State University before moving on to assistant coaching positions with Central Oklahoma (2011) and South Dakota (2012-15). In 2015, Williams participated in the NFL's Bill Walsh Minority Coaching Fellowship program with the Lions, where he served as a coaching intern for linebackers and special teams. Williams got his first opportunity with the Minority Coaching Fellowship with the Chicago Bears from 2013-14. He also served as the special teams coordinator for the East/West Shrine Game in 2017 and 2018.

A native of Fresno, Calif., Williams was a two-year starter at defensive back at Fresno City College before going on to start at the University of Mary (N.D.) from 2006-07. He and his wife, Elizabeth, have four children.

WILLIAMS' COACHING BACKGROUND

2021-Present	Special Teams Coordinator | Atlanta Falcons
2020	Interim Special Teams Coordinator | Detroit Lions
2019-20	Assistant Special Teams | Detroit Lions
2018	Defensive Assistant | Los Angeles Chargers
2016-17	Assistant Special Teams | Los Angeles Chargers
2015	Defensive Line/Special Teams | South Dakota
2013-14	Defensive Line | South Dakota
2012	Outside Linebackers | South Dakota
2011	Linebackers | Central Oklahoma
2010	Linebackers/Asst. Special Teams | Winona State University

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COACHING STAFF

TIM BERBENICH
PASS GAME SPECIALIST/ GAME MANAGEMENT

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 2
SEASONS IN NFL: 21

Tim Berbenich was named Atlanta Falcons pass game specialist/game management on Feb. 3, 2024.

The Falcons offense finished No. 6 in total offense in 2024 (369.8 yd/g), a marked improvement from the unit's 17th ranking in 2023. Atlanta also boasted a top-10 rushing attack for the third consecutive season, averaging 130.5 rushing yards per game. The unit eclipsed 500 yards of total offense twice in 2024, tied for the second-most in the league. Atlanta totaled 6,287 yards of total offense in 2024, the team's highest total since the 2016 season.

Berbenich joined the Falcons after spending the 2023 season as a coaching analyst for the Los Angeles Rams.

Prior to his time with the Rams, Berbenich spent one season with the Houston Texans as the team's tight ends coach. Under Berbenich's guidance, Jordan Akins posted 37 receptions for 495 yards with five touchdowns and led all tight ends with 13.4 yards per catch.

Berbenich spent three seasons as an offensive quality control coach for the Raiders (2018-20) before being promoted to running backs coach in 2021. That season, Josh Jacobs tallied 872 rushing yards on 217 carries with nine touchdowns while averaging 4.0 yards per carry.

Prior to his time with the Raiders, Berbenich spent five seasons with the Indianapolis Colts working in various roles, including offensive assistant (2013-14), offensive assistant/assistant quarterbacks (2016-17) and defensive assistant (2015). Working with Andrew Luck in 2016, Berbenich helped the quarterback pass for 4,240 yards with 31 touchdowns while posting a QB rating of 96.4. The following season, Jacoby Brissett filled in for an injured Luck and threw for 3,098 yards with 13 scores and an 81.7 passer rating.

Berbenich spent six seasons with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers from 2006 to 2011 filling a multitude of roles. From 2009-11, he was the team's assistant wide receivers coach. During that time, he worked with Mike Williams who finished second in AP Offensive Rookie of the Year voting after posting 65 catches, 964 receiving yards and 11 touchdowns in 2010. Berbenich also spent one season (2008) as the assistant running backs coach, working with Warrick Dunn, as the future Falcons Limited Partner rushed for 786 yards and two touchdowns in his final season in the NFL. He also spent two seasons (2006-07) as the Bucs offensive quality control coach.

Berbenich began his NFL career with the Jets, spending three seasons in New York as an offensive assistant (2003-04) and offensive quality control coach (2005). He graduated from Hamilton College and he has a wife and two sons.

BERBENICH'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2024-Present	Pass Game Spec./Game Management | Atlanta Falcons
2023	Coaching Analyst | Los Angeles Rams
2022	Tight Ends | Houston Texans
2021	Running Backs | Las Vegas Raiders
2018-20	Offensive Quality Control | Las Vegas Raiders
2016-17	Offensive Asst./Asst. QB | Indianapolis Colts
2013-14	Offensive Assistant | Indianapolis Colts
2015	Defensive Assistant | Indianapolis Colts
2009-11	Assistant Wide Receivers | Tampa Bay Buccaneers
2008	Assistant Running Backs | Tampa Bay Buccaneers
2006-07	Offensive Quality Control | Tampa Bay Buccaneers
2005	Offensive Quality Control | New York Jets
2003-04	Offensive Assistant | New York Jets

K.J. BLACK
OFFENSIVE ASSISTANT

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 2
SEASONS IN NFL: 4

K.J. Black was named Atlanta Falcons offensive assistant on Feb. 3, 2024.

In the 2024 season, Black worked primarily with the team's wide receivers, guiding third-year wideout Drake London to single-season career highs in receptions (100), receiving yards (1,271) and receiving touchdowns (nine). London became the third player in Falcons history with 100 receptions, 1,200 yards and nine touchdowns in a single season, joining Roddy White (2010) and Terance Mathis (1994).

Black also worked with free agent additions Darnell Mooney and Ray-Ray McCloud III. In 16 games played, Mooney recorded 64 receptions for 992 yards and a single-season best five receiving touchdowns. McCloud recorded career bests in receptions (62), receiving yards (686), rushes (10) and rushing yards (79) in his first year as a Falcon.

Black arrived in Atlanta after spending two seasons (2022-23) with the Los Angeles Rams. He served as an offensive assistant in 2023 after spending 2022 as part of the Bill Walsh Diversity Coaching Fellowship, where he worked alongside Falcons Offensive Coordinator Zac Robinson.

In 2023, Black helped Rams quarterback Matthew Stafford complete 326-of-521 attempts (62.6 percent) for 3,965 yards, 24 touchdowns and 11 interceptions for a 92.5 passer rating and earn Pro Bowl honors for the second time in his career. Stafford ranked in the top 12 among quarterbacks in completions, passing yards and touchdown passes. Rams wide receiver Puka Nacua recorded the most receptions (105) and receiving yards (1,486) by a rookie in NFL history, earning second-team AP All-Pro and Pro Bowl honors. Nacua also set the NFL record for most receiving yards by a rookie in a playoff game in NFL history with 181 yards against Detroit.

As a coaching fellow during the 2022 season, Black played a pivotal role in the development of younger quarterbacks John Wolford and Bryce Perkins. During an injury-riddled season, both Wolford and Perkins saw playing time and made significant improvements while working with Black. Wolford started three games in place of an injured Stafford and threw for 390 yards and one touchdown. Perkins appeared in four games, starting one, and threw for 161 yards and a touchdown, while rushing for 90 yards.

Prior to joining the Rams, Black served as co-offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach at Florida A&M. He joined the coaching staff at FAMU in 2019 as passing game coordinator and quarterbacks coach. Under Black's leadership, Rattlers quarterback Ryan Stanley threw for 2,566 yards in 2019, earning MEAC Offensive Player of the Year honors.

Black started his coaching career in 2011 at his alma mater, Prairie View A&M, where he served in a variety of roles including graduate assistant (2011-14), passing game coordinator/quarterbacks coach (2015-17) and tight ends coach (2018).

As a player, Black played quarterback at Western Kentucky University before transferring to Prairie View A&M, where he threw for 4,187 yards and 35 touchdowns over two seasons with the program. In 2009, he led the Panthers to the program's first SWAC Championship since 1964 and earned Offensive Player of the Year honors and Black College Player of the Year accolades.

Black and his wife, Erin, have two daughters, Peyton Dianne and Zoe Giselle.

BLACK'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2024-Present	Offensive Assistant | Atlanta Falcons
2023	Offensive Assistant | Los Angeles Rams
2022	Coaching Fellow | Los Angeles Rams
2020-21	Co-Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks | Florida A&M
2019	Passing Game Coordinator/Quarterbacks | Florida A&M
2018	Tight Ends | Prairie View A&M
2015-17	Passing Game Coordinator/Quarterbacks | Prairie View A&M
2011-14	Graduate Assistant | Prairie View A&M

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COACHING STAFF

SHAWN FLAHERTY
ASSISTANT OFFENSIVE LINE

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 3
SEASONS IN NFL: 4

Shawn Flaherty was named Atlanta Falcons assistant offensive line coach on Feb. 27, 2023, after spending the 2022 season as a football analyst on Atlanta's coaching staff.

In 2024, Atlanta's offensive line blocked for an offense that ranked sixth in the league with 369.82 yards per game. Flaherty also helped guide guard Chris Lindstrom to a third-consecutive Pro Bowl appearance and second-team All-Pro honors. In 2024, Atlanta again posted a top-10 rushing attack and eclipsed 100 yards in 12 games, including a 227-yard rushing game in Week 18 vs. Carolina. The Falcons also boasted the league's fifth-ranked passing offense in 2024, averaging 239.3 passing yards per game.

In Flaherty's first season in with the Falcons, the team boasted a top-10 rushing offense averaging 127 yards per game and eclipsing 100 yards in 11 games. Atlanta totaled 657 of its 2,159 rushing yards before contact and averaged 1.33 yards before contact per rush. Atlanta's offense totaled 400-or-more yards in six games tied for the fourth most by a Falcons offense. Running behind the Falcons offensive line, Bijan Robinson led all rookies with 976 rushing yards and broke William Andrews (1,332) franchise record for yards from scrimmage by a rookie with 1,463.

Flaherty came to Atlanta having spent three seasons (2019-21) as a member of the Miami Dolphins coaching staff, serving as a coaching assistant from 2019-20 and an assistant offensive line coach in 2021.

Over the final 10 weeks of the 2021 season, the Dolphins offensive line limited opponents to 21 sacks, tied for the 13th-fewest in the NFL over that span. Miami's running game also improved from 78.6 yards per game to 104.3 yards per game over the final 10 games of the season.

Prior to his time in Miami, Flaherty spent two seasons (2017-18) as a graduate assistant at North Carolina State University. In his role, Flaherty worked primarily with the offensive line under the tutelage of current Falcons offensive line coach Dwayne Ledford, who served in that same role for the Wolfpack from 2016-18.

Flaherty was a four-year (2013-16) letterman at Towson (Md.) University, where he started games at both guard and center, and earned his bachelor's degree in business administration.

FLAHERTY'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2023-Present	Assistant Offensive Line | Atlanta Falcons
2022	Football Analyst | Atlanta Falcons
2021	Assistant Offensive Line | Miami Dolphins
2019-20	Coaching Assistant | Miami Dolphins
2017-18	Graduate Assistant | North Carolina State

JERRY GRAY
ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/ DEFENSE

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 3
SEASONS IN NFL: 38

Jerry Gray was hired as the Atlanta Falcons Assistant Head Coach/Defense on Jan. 31, 2023.

In 2024, the Falcons finished the season tied for third in the league in opponent plays of 20-or-more yards, allowing only 52 (eight rushing, 44 passing) throughout the season. Under Gray's guidance, safety Jessie Bates III was the only player in the NFL to record four interceptions and four forced fumbles in 2024. Bates had a game-sealing interception in Atlanta's Week 2 win against the Philadelphia Eagles and also recorded his third career pick-six in the Week 16 win over the New York Giants. Additionally, cornerback A.J. Terrell Jr. allowed only 10 receptions for 114 yards on 21 targets in 114 coverage snaps in Weeks 13-18, the second-fewest receptions allowed by any player over that span.

In 2023, Gray's first season with the Falcons, Atlanta's defense finished third in third-down conversion rate (33.8 percent), fourth in red zone efficiency (45.3 percent), eighth in passing yards per game (202.9) and 11th in total yards per game (321.1). The Falcons defense also recorded 42 sacks, tied for the sixth-most sacks in a single season in franchise history, and finished the season tied for the second-most forced fumbles in the NFL with 19.

Additionally, Gray helped coach Bates to the first Pro Bowl honors of his career. Bates also earned Associated Press second-team All-Pro honors for the second time in his career (2020) after finishing the season with career highs in tackles (132), interceptions (six) and forced fumbles (three), while adding 11 passes defensed and three tackles for loss.

Gray has 28 years of NFL coaching experience, including two as assistant head coach/defense, eight as a defensive coordinator and 16 as defensive backs/secondary coach. Gray has helped defenses to top-10 league rankings in scoring defense 10 times, in total defense 11 times and in passing defense 14 times. He has worked with defensive backs who have combined for 15 Pro Bowl selections in his 17 seasons coaching the position, with at least one of his players earning Pro Bowl recognition in 11 of those seasons. During Gray's time working with the secondary, seven different players earned first-team or second-team All-Pro honors from the Associated Press.

Gray served as the defensive backs/passing game coordinator for the Green Bay Packers from 2021-22. In his three seasons (2020-22) with Green Bay, the Packers finished in the top 10 in passing defense in all three years.

In 2022, Green Bay's defense finished sixth in passing defense, limiting opponents to 197.0 yards per game, and tied for fourth in interceptions with 17. Under Gray's guidance, cornerback Jaire Alexander earned All-Pro honors from the Associated Press for the second time in three seasons with Gray. In 2020, Alexander became the first Packers cornerback to earn All-Pro honors since Charles Woodson in 2011.

In 2021, Gray helped the Packers finish in the top 10 in total defense (328.2 ypg.), passing defense (219.1 ypg.), takeaways (26) and interceptions (18). Cornerback Rasul Douglas had a career year, returning two interceptions for touchdowns, tied for the fourth-most in a season in franchise history.

Gray joined Green Bay after spending six seasons (2014-19) as the defensive backs coach for the Minnesota Vikings. During his time with Minnesota, he was a part of a defensive staff that helped the Vikings rank in the Top 10 in the league in scoring defense for five straight seasons (2015-19), one of only two teams in the NFL to do so over that span (New England). Minnesota ranked second in the NFL in scoring defense (19.3 ppg) and third in overall defense (321.8 ypg.) and passing defense (214.7 ypg.) from 2014-19.

In Minnesota, Gray tutored safety Harrison Smith, who earned Pro Bowl recognition in five consecutive seasons (2015-19) and first-team All-Pro honors in 2017. Gray also worked with cornerback Xavier Rhodes, who was selected to the Pro Bowl three times (2016-17, 2019) and earned first-team All-Pro recognition in 2017 as the Vikings had two defensive backs earn first-team All-Pro honors in the same season for the first time since 1988.

In 2019, Gray's defensive backs helped the Vikings to Top 10 league rankings in scoring defense (18.9 ppg.), takeaways (31) and interceptions (17). Safety Anthony Harris, who entered the NFL as a college free agent in 2015, tied for the league lead with a career-high six interceptions in his first season as a full-time starter – becoming the first Viking to lead the NFL in the category since safety Brian Russell tied for the league lead in 2003.

The 2018 Vikings ranked fourth in the NFL in total defense (309.7 ypg.), the third straight season finishing in the top five in the league in the category. Under Gray's tutelage, Smith earned second-team All-Pro honors as the team's defensive backs helped the Vikings lead the league in third-down defense (30.5 pct.) for the second straight season. In 2017, Minnesota led the NFL in both scoring defense (15.8 ppg.) and total defense (275.9 ypg.), marking the first time the Vikings had done so since 1970. Gray's secondary helped limit opponents to 192.4 passing yards per game – second in the NFL – in 2017, the best mark posted by Minnesota since 1993 (179.4 ypg.).

In 2016, Gray's defensive backs helped the Vikings rank sixth in scoring defense (19.2 ppg) and third in both total defense (314.9 ypg.) and passing defense (207.9 ypg.). Rhodes and Smith both earned Pro Bowl recognition, giving Minnesota its first secondary duo in the Pro Bowl since cornerback Audray McMillian and safety Todd Scott in 1992. In 2015, the Vikings ranked fifth in the NFL in scoring defense (18.9 ppg.) and won their first NFC North title since 2009.

In Gray's first season with Minnesota in 2014, he helped the defense rank seventh in passing defense (223.3 ypg.) after the Vikings had finished 31st in the league in the category in 2013 (287.2 ypg.). Gray's group also helped engineer the largest improvement in the NFL in points allowed from 2013 to 2014 as the Vikings gave up just 343 points in 2014 (11th) after allowing 480 points in 2013 (32nd).

Prior to coming to Minnesota, Gray spent the previous three seasons (2011-13) as the defensive coordinator for the Tennessee Titans. In 2012, Gray's unit ranked seventh in the NFL in interceptions (19) and 10th in sacks (39). In his first season as coordinator with the Titans, the team finished eighth in

GRAY'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2023-Present	Asst. Head Coach/Defense | Atlanta Falcons
2021-22	DBs/Passing Game Coordinator | Green Bay Packers
2020	Defensive Backs | Green Bay Packers
2014-19	Defensive Backs | Minnesota Vikings
2011-13	Defensive Coordinator | Tennessee Titans
2010	Secondary | Seattle Seahawks
2006-09	Secondary | Washington Commanders
2001-05	Defensive Coordinator | Buffalo Bills
1999-2000	Defensive Backs | Tennessee Titans
1997-98	Defensive Quality Control | Tennessee Oilers
1995-96	Defensive Backs | SMU

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the NFL in scoring defense (19.8 ppg.) and 10th in red-zone defense (47.9 percent).

In 2010, Gray served as the defensive backs coach for the Seattle Seahawks and tutored rookie safety Earl Thomas, who started all 16 games and ranked third among rookies with five interceptions.

From 2006-09, Gray coached the secondary for Washington, where he helped the team rank in the Top 10 in scoring defense in three consecutive seasons (2007-09) and in passing defense in back-to-back seasons (2008-09). During his time with Washington, Gray tutored safety Sean Taylor, who earned two Pro Bowl selections (2006-07) and second-team All-Pro honors in 2007.

Gray spent the previous five seasons (2001-05) as the defensive coordinator for the Bills, helping the team rank second in total defense in back-to-back seasons (2003-04). The 2004 campaign also saw Buffalo finish in the Top 10 in scoring defense (17.8 ppg.), passing defense (164.0 ypg.), takeaways (39), interceptions (24) and sacks (45). The 2003 Bills ranked fifth in scoring defense (17.4 ppg.), second in passing defense (169.2 ypg.) and tied for ninth in sacks (38).

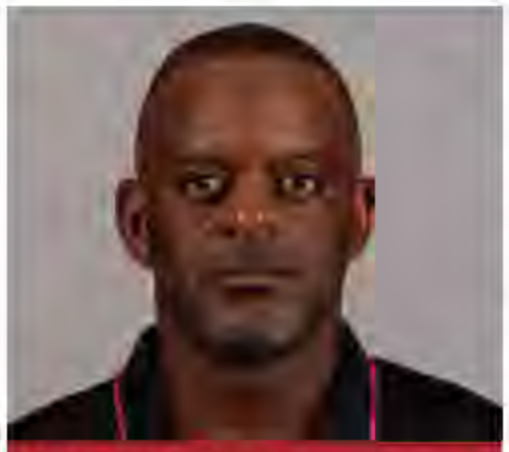
Gray coached the defensive backs for the Titans in 1999-2000, helping Tennessee's defense set a single-season franchise record for points allowed (11.9 ppg) in 2000. That season saw the Titans lead the league in both total defense (238.3 ypg.) and passing defense (151.4 ypg.) – the only time in franchise history that the club led the NFL in both categories. Second-year cornerback Samari Rolle and safety Blaine Bishop both earned Pro Bowl recognition under Gray's tutelage in 2000, with Rolle earning first-team all-pro honors and Bishop taking home second-team all-pro recognition.

Gray's first NFL coaching job came in 1997-98 with the Tennessee Oilers as defensive quality control coach. He coached defensive backs at Southern Methodist University in 1995-96, starting at the school one season after retiring as a player.

As a player, Gray earned four Pro Bowl selections (1986-89), twice earned second-team all-pro honors (1986, 1989) and recorded 28 interceptions during his nine-year NFL career. Originally selected by the Los Angeles Rams in the first round (21st overall) of the 1985 NFL Draft, Gray went on to play seven seasons with the Rams (1985-91), one season with the Houston Oilers (1992) and one season with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers (1993). Gray was named the NFL's Defensive Back of the Year by the NFLPA in 1989 and won Pro Bowl MVP honors in 1990. He posted at least six interceptions in a season three times from 1986-92, tied for the third-most in the NFL over that span.

Gray was a two-time consensus All-America selection at the University of Texas, where he also was twice named the Southwest Conference Defensive Player of the Year as a safety (1983-84). He is a member of the University of Texas' All-Time Team and was selected to the school's All-Decade Team for the 1980s. Gray graduated with a degree in speech communications.

Gray was born Dec. 16, 1962, in Lubbock, Texas. He and his wife, Sherry, have two sons, Jeremy and Jayden. In 2002, Gray started the Jerry Gray Foundation, which supports youth in Lubbock and provides scholarships to the underprivileged.



IKE HILLIARD
WIDE RECEIVERS

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 2
SEASONS IN NFL: 25

Ike Hilliard was named Atlanta Falcons wide receivers coach on Feb. 1, 2024.

In his first season as Atlanta's wide receivers coach, Hilliard guided third-year wideout Drake London to single-season career highs in receptions (100), receiving yards (1,271), and receiving touchdowns (nine). London became the third player in Falcons history with 100 receptions, 1,200 yards and nine touchdowns in a single season, joining Roddy White (2010) and Terance Mathis (1994).

Hilliard also worked with free agent additions Darnell Mooney and Ray-Ray McCloud III. In 16 games played, Mooney recorded 64 receptions for 992 yards and a single-season best five receiving touchdowns. McCloud recorded career bests in receptions (62), receiving yards (686), rushes (10) and rushing yards (79) in his first year as a Falcon.

Hilliard arrived in Atlanta after having served as co-offensive coordinator/wide receivers coach at Auburn in 2022 and spending 10 seasons as a wide receivers coach in the NFL for the Pittsburgh Steelers (2020-21), Washington Commanders (2012; 2014-19) and Buffalo Bills (2013).

At Auburn, Hilliard helped running back Tank Bigsby match his single-season career high with 10 rushing touchdowns, while recording a single-season career-high 5.4 yards per carry. Bigsby finished the season rushing for 970 yards on 179 attempts before declaring for the NFL Draft, where he was selected in the third round (88th overall) by the Jacksonville Jaguars. Under Hilliard's guidance, Tigers veteran wide receiver Ja'Varrius Johnson set single-season career highs in receptions (26), receiving yards (493) and receiving touchdowns (three).

While with Pittsburgh in 2021, Hilliard coached Diontae Johnson who earned All-Pro honors for the first time in his career after leading the Steelers with 107 receptions for 1,161 yards and eight touchdowns. In 2020, Pittsburgh became just the seventh team in NFL history to have five different players catch at least five touchdown passes in a single season – Chase Claypool (nine), JuJu Smith-Schuster (nine), Johnson (seven), James Washington (five) and Eric Ebron (five). Claypool led all rookie receivers in touchdown receptions (nine), while finishing second among rookies in total touchdowns (11) and fourth among rookies in receiving yards (873).

With Washington, Hilliard helped Terry McLaurin compile one of the best rookie seasons by a receiver in franchise history as he led the team in receptions (58), receiving yards (919) and touchdown catches (seven) in 2019. His 919 receiving yards and seven touchdowns ranked second in franchise history among rookies. In 2018, Hilliard played a major role in wide receiver Josh Doctson setting single-season career highs in receptions (44) and receiving yards (532).

Hilliard guided a young wide receiver corps in 2017 that helped quarterback Kirk Cousins become the first player in team history to record a third consecutive 4,000-yard passing season. Jamison Crowder led Washington in receptions (66) and receiving yards (789), and at age 24 on the final day of the calendar year, became the youngest player to lead Washington in receptions since Gary Clark (24) in 1986.

Hilliard's group played a major role in Washington's record-setting offense in 2016, a unit that set single-season team records in yards per game (403.4), yards per play (6.40), net passing yards (4,758), completions (407), passing first downs (226) and 500-yard games (three). Veteran wideouts Pierre Garçon (1,041) and DeSean Jackson (1,005) both eclipsed the 1,000-yard mark on the season, marking the first time Washington featured multiple 1,000-yard receivers since 1999 (Albert Connell and Michael Westbrook).

During Washington's NFC East championship season in 2015, Hilliard coached a group that prominently featured two prolific veterans (Garçon and Jackson) and two young players in their first or second seasons (Crowder and Ryan Grant, respectively). Garçon posted 72 receptions, the second-highest total of his career, while Jackson recorded 528 receiving yards and four touchdowns despite being limited by injury to nine games. Hilliard's guidance also helped Crowder to a Washington rookie record 59 receptions in 2015.

In his return to Washington in 2014, Hilliard coached the newly-acquired Jackson, who led Washington with 1,169 receiving yards on 56 receptions. Jackson became the first player in franchise history to record 1,000 receiving yards in his first season in Washington (Bobby Mitchell in 1962, Henry Ellard in 1994, Laveranues Coles in 2003 and Santana Moss in 2005).

Hilliard served as wide receivers coach for the Buffalo Bills in 2013, helping mold a young group that included rookie second-round pick Robert Woods (40 receptions for 587 yards with three touchdowns) and rookie third-round pick Marquise Goodwin (17 receptions for 283 yards with three touchdowns).

In his first stint with Washington in 2012, Hilliard guided the team's receivers to the franchise's first division title since 1999. He incorporated free agents Garçon and Joshua Morgan into the offense, helping Garçon lead the team in receiving yards (633 in only 10 games) and helping Morgan lead Washington in receptions (48). Hilliard also oversaw the resurgence of Moss, who caught 41 passes for 573 yards and eight touchdowns.

In 2011, Hilliard served as the assistant wide receivers coach for the Miami Dolphins. He helped in the development of wide receiver Brandon Marshall, who was named to his third-career Pro Bowl and first as a member of the Dolphins. Additionally, Marshall finished third in the AFC in receiving yards with 1,214 and recorded his fifth-consecutive 1,000-yard season.

Prior to joining the Dolphins, Hilliard spent two seasons coaching for the Florida Tuskers of the United Football League.

As a player, Hilliard was selected by the New York Giants in the first round (seventh overall) of the 1997 NFL Draft. He played 12 seasons – eight with the New York Giants (1997-2004) and four with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers (2005-08). In 161 career games (106 starts), Hilliard caught 546 passes for 6,397 yards and 35 touchdowns.

Hilliard played collegiately at the University of Florida from 1994-96, where he recorded 126 receptions for 2,214 yards and 26 touchdowns and earned first-team All-SEC and consensus All-American honors in 1996, as he helped lead the Gators to a national title.

Hilliard is a native of Patterson, La. He and his wife, Lourdes, have five children, Kye, Kalyn, Leila, Ilysa and Jewels.

HILLIARD'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2024-Present	Wide Receivers | Atlanta Falcons
2022	Co-Offensive Coordinator/Wide Receivers | Auburn Tigers
2020-21	Wide Receivers | Pittsburgh Steelers
2014-19	Wide Receivers | Washington Commanders
2013	Wide Receivers | Buffalo Bills
2012	Wide Receivers | Washington Commanders
2011	Assistant Wide Receivers | Miami Dolphins
2009-10	Wide Receivers | Florida Tuskers (UFL)

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JUSTIN HOOD
SECONDARY

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 2
SEASONS IN NFL: 5

Justin Hood was named the Atlanta Falcons secondary coach on Feb. 3, 2024.

In 2024, the Falcons finished the season tied for third in the league in opponent plays of 20-or-more yards, allowing only 52 (44 passing, eight rushing) throughout the season. Hood helped guide safety Jessie Bates III, who finished the season with 10 passes defensed, four interceptions, one fumble recovery, a career-high four forced fumbles and one sack. Bates was the only player in the NFL to record both four interceptions and four forced fumbles. Additionally, cornerback A.J. Terrell Jr. allowed only 10 receptions for 114 yards on 21 targets in 114 coverage snaps in Weeks 13-18, the second-fewest receptions allowed by any player over that span.

Hood joined the Falcons after spending three seasons (2021-23) with the Green Bay Packers as a defensive quality control coach. In 2023, Hood was instrumental in helping Green Bay finish ninth in passing defense (206.8), ninth in red zone defense (50.88 percent) and 10th in opponent points per game (20.6) en route to the club's first playoff appearance since 2021.

The Packers held their opponents to 20-or-fewer points nine times during the 2023 regular season, tied for the 10th-most in the league. Green Bay also had three players – Rashan Gary (nine), Preston Smith (eight), Kenny Clark (7.5) – record at least seven sacks each, the team's most in a single season since 2007 (three players). With eight sacks on the season, Smith was one of 11 players in the NFL to post at least eight sacks in each season over 2021-23.

The 2022 season saw Hood help Green Bay finish near the top of the league in multiple passing-defense categories, ranking sixth in passing yards allowed per game (197.0), sixth in interception rate percentage (3.56) and tied for fourth with 17 interceptions. The Packers were also one of only four teams (Baltimore, Kansas City, New York Jets) to hold 16 opponents under 30 points during the regular season, a franchise single-season high.

In 2021, Hood assisted with a defense that ranked in the top 10 in the NFL, finishing ninth in total defense (328.2 ypg), 10th in passing defense (219.1 ypg), tied for sixth in interceptions (18) and tied for eighth in takeaways (26). The unit's 328.2 yards allowed per game were the fewest by Green Bay since 2010 (309.1 ypg), while the 26 takeaways were the most registered by the Packers since 2014 (27).

Prior to Green Bay, Hood spent two seasons (2019-20) as the secondary coach and defensive pass game coordinator at Kent State. Under Hood's direction in 2020, safety Dean Clark led the Golden Flashes with 28 tackles (19 solo), an interception and a forced fumble as the team played a Covid-abbreviated four-game season.

In Hood's first year with the program in 2019, cornerback Jamal Parker earned second-team All-Mid-American Conference honors after recording 10 pass breakups, fourth most in the MAC, in addition to three interceptions, tied for fifth in the MAC. Defensive back Qwuantrezz Knight led the team with 11 tackles for loss on the season and was named the defensive MVP of Kent State's 51-41 victory over Utah State in the Tropical Smoothie Café Frisco Bowl (Dec. 20).

Hood spent three seasons (2016-18) coaching at the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) level prior to joining Kent State, serving two seasons (2016-17) at Davidson College before joining Western Carolina in 2018, where he coached outside linebackers. He originally joined Davidson's staff as a safeties coach and recruiting coordinator in 2016 before being promoted to defensive pass game coordinator in 2017. In December of 2017, Hood served as the interim head coach for the Wildcats.

Prior to his time at Davidson, Hood served as the defensive coordinator for two seasons (2014-15) at Capital University, where he primarily coached the defensive backs. In 2014, safety Jimmy Curtis earned All-Ohio Athletic Conference honorable mention after leading the team in tackles (59), passes defensed (eight), forced fumbles (four) and interceptions (three).

Hood began his collegiate coaching career at the University of Oregon as a recruiting administrative assistant for two seasons (2010-11), before serving as an offensive intern and in quality control from 2011-12. He then worked as a graduate assistant at the University of Illinois for two seasons (2013-14), working with cornerbacks and maintaining responsibilities in scouting and film breakdown, while coaching the scout offense and special teams.

Hood gained his first NFL coaching experience as a Bill Walsh Diversity Coaching Fellow for the New York Giants in August 2013, working with the running backs and managing the scout special teams.

The Youngtown, Ohio, native earned his bachelor's degree from Ashland University in 2008. He also earned a Master's degree from the University of Illinois in 2013.

HOOD'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2024-Present	Secondary | Atlanta Falcons
2021-23	Defensive Quality Control | Green Bay Packers
2019-20	Secondary/Defensive Pass Game Coordinator | Kent State
2018	Outside Linebackers | Western Carolina
2017	Interim Head Coach | Davidson
2017	Defensive Pass Game Coordinator | Davidson
2016	Safeties/Recruiting Coordinator | Davidson
2014-15	Defensive Coordinator | Capital
2013-14	Graduate Assistant | Illinois
2011-12	Offensive Intern/Quality Control | Oregon
2010-11	Recruiting Administrative Assistant | Oregon

DAVE HUXTABLE
SENIOR DEFENSIVE ASSISTANT

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 3
SEASONS IN NFL: 3

Dave Huxtable was hired by the Atlanta Falcons as a senior defensive assistant on Feb. 27, 2023.

In his first season with the Falcons, Atlanta's defense tallied 42 sacks, tied for the sixth-most sacks in a single season in franchise history. The Falcons defense doubled its sack total from 2022 (21) resulting in the largest year-over-year increase by the Falcons since the individual sack became an NFL statistic in 1982.

In 2023, the Falcons defense finished third in third down defense and fourth in red zone efficiency. David Onyemata registered a career high in tackles (50), passes defensed (three) and forced fumbles (two), while Calais Campbell finished with 6.5 sacks and became one of six active players to reach 100 career sacks. Third-round rookie defensive lineman Zach Harrison recorded three sacks in the month of December, tied for the third most among rookies. Additionally, Harrison's 17.6 percent pressure rate was the second highest among rookies from Week 13-17 in 2023.

Prior to Atlanta, Huxtable had 40 seasons of coaching experience at the collegiate level – including 18 seasons as a defensive coordinator. He spent two seasons (2021-22) as an analyst for the University of Alabama from 2021-22. Before joining the Crimson Tide's staff, Huxtable spent one season (2020) as an analyst for the University of Texas after spending seven seasons (2013-19) as the defensive coordinator at North Carolina State University.

In 2018, North Carolina State ranked second in the ACC and 13th in the nation in rushing defense (109.1 yards per game). Additionally, linebacker Germaine Pratt earned first-team All-ACC honors after averaging more than nine tackles per game. In 2017, the Wolfpack ranked third in the conference in rushing yards per game, limiting opponents to 131 yards per game on the ground. Under Huxtable's tutelage, four Wolfpack defenders were selected in the 2018 NFL Draft, including the fifth-overall selection, Bradley Chubb. In 2016, NC State ranked eighth in the nation in rushing yards per game, limiting opponents to 108.6 yards per game – the fifth fewest in a season in program history.

Prior to his time at NC State, Huxtable spent one season as the defensive coordinator at the University of Pittsburgh where his Panthers defense ranked 16th in the nation in total defense (325.8 yards per game), 21st in scoring defense (19.7 points per game), 24th in rushing defense (129.1 yards per game) and 25th in passing defense (196.8). Defensive lineman Aaron Donald earned first-team All-Big East honors after

HUXTABLE'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2023-Present	Senior Defensive Assistant | Atlanta Falcons
2021-22	Analyst | Alabama
2020	Analyst | Texas
2013-19	Defensive Coordinator | North Carolina State
2012	Defensive Coordinator | Pittsburgh
2011	Linebackers | Wisconsin
2008-10	Defensive Coordinator | Central Florida
2004-07	Linebackers/Special Teams Coord. | Central Florida
2002-03	Defensive Coord./Linebackers | North Carolina
2001	Linebackers/Special Teams Coord. | North Carolina
2000	Linebackers/Special Teams Coord. | Oklahoma State
1999	Defensive Line | East Carolina
1998	Linebackers | East Carolina
1996-97	Defensive Coord./Linebackers | Georgia Tech
1995	Linebackers | Georgia Tech
1992-94	Linebackers/Special Teams Coord. | Georgia Tech
1990-91	Linebackers/Special Teams | East Carolina
1989	Defensive Coordinator | Western Kentucky
1985-88	Linebackers | Western Kentucky
1983-84	Defensive Coordinator | Independence (Kan.) CC
1982	Graduate Assistant | Iowa State

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leading the conference and ranking 11th nationally with 18.5 tackles for loss, while safety Jason Hendricks was a second-team selection after leading the Big East and tying for ninth nationally with five interceptions.

In 2011, Huxtable oversaw the development of first-team All-Big Ten linebackers Chris Borland and Mike Taylor. The linebacking pair led the Badgers to a Big Ten Championship and a Rose Bowl berth. Huxtable came to Wisconsin after spending seven seasons (2004-10) at the University of Central Florida where he spent four seasons (2004-07) coaching linebackers and special teams, and three seasons (2008-10) as the Knights' defensive coordinator. In his final season at UCF, the Knights ranked eighth in the nation in scoring defense (17.1 points per game), eighth in rushing defense (108.4), and 15th in total defense (315.4). Defensive end Bruce Miller was a two-time C-USA Defensive Player of the Year and finished his career as UCF's career sacks leader with 35.5.

Huxtable spent three seasons (2001-03) at the University of North Carolina, coaching linebackers and special teams in 2001, before being named defensive coordinator and linebackers coach from 2002-03. Under Huxtable, David Thornton, a former walk-on, earned All-ACC honors and was selected in the NFL Draft. Falcons Head Coach Arthur Smith played along the Tar Heels offensive line while Huxtable was on staff at North Carolina.

Prior to his time at North Carolina, Huxtable spent one season (2000) at Oklahoma State as a linebackers coach/special teams coordinator and two seasons (1998-99) at East Carolina where he coached linebackers in 1998 and defensive line in 1999. Huxtable spent six seasons (1992-97) at Georgia Tech coaching linebackers. In 1996, Huxtable would earn defensive coordinator duties as well. During his time with the Yellow Jackets, Huxtable oversaw the development of Keith Brooking, who finished as the school's career tackles leader with 467 and was selected with the 12th overall pick in the first round of the 1998 NFL Draft by the Falcons.

Huxtable began his collegiate coaching career as a graduate assistant at Iowa State in 1982. From Ames, he would spend two seasons (1983-84) as the defensive coordinator at Independence (Kan.) CC, five seasons (1985-89) at Western Kentucky and two seasons (1990-91) at East Carolina where he coached Robert Jones, who earned consensus All-America honors, was selected in the first round of the 1992 NFL Draft and won three Super Bowls with the Dallas Cowboys.

Huxtable earned a bachelor's degree in education from Eastern Illinois in 1979. A native of Elgin, Ill., he and his wife, Vicki, have one son, Jake, and one daughter, Shea.

NICK JONES
ASSISTANT OFFENSIVE LINE

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 3
SEASONS IN NFL: 6

Nick Jones was named Atlanta Falcons assistant offensive line coach on Feb. 2, 2024.

In his first season with the Falcons, Jones worked with an offensive line that blocked for an offense that ranked sixth in the league with 369.8 yards per game, fifth in passing yards per game (239.3) and 10th in rushing yards per game (130.5). Jones also guided guard Chris Lindstrom to a third-consecutive Pro Bowl appearance and second-team All-Pro accolades. In 2024, Atlanta again posted a top-10 rushing attack and eclipsed 100 yards in 12 games, including a 227-yard rushing game in Week 18 vs. Carolina.

Jones arrived in Atlanta having previously served as assistant offensive line coach for the Los Angeles Rams from 2021-23. Jones helped coach an offensive line that paved the way for running back Kyren Williams, who finished third in the NFL with 1,144 yards on 228 attempts in 2023. The unit also blocked for quarterback Matthew Stafford, who finished sixth in the NFL with 264.3 passing yards per game. With Jones' assistance, the Rams' offensive line held opponents to a 34.7 quarterback pressure rate, 11th in the NFL.

During the 2022 season, Jones worked primarily with an offensive line unit that started 11 different combinations of players in each of the first 11 games as a result of injuries. The Rams offensive line was forced to play at least three players at every position except right tackle. Despite the adversity, the Rams offensive line unit stepped up later in the season and didn't allow a sack in Week 16 against the Broncos and allowed just one sack in three games during the 2022 season. With the guidance of Jones, players such as offensive lineman Coleman Shelton and tackle Alaric Jackson were able to emerge as starting-caliber players for the Rams. He has also played a role in the success of center Brian Allen, tackle Rob Havenstein and former Rams guard David Edwards.

Jones was also part of the Rams' coaching staff that worked with Super Bowl Champion and Walter Payton Man of the Year Andrew Whitworth during the final year of his career.

In his first year with the Rams, the offensive line tied for sixth in the NFL for fewest sacks allowed (31), fifth in pressures allowed (173) and first in time to pressure allowed on offense (2.76 seconds). The Rams offensive line did not allow a sack in two games that season and allowed just one sack on seven occasions.

Prior to joining the Rams, Jones spent the 2020 season in the NFL as a Diversity Coaching Fellow and worked with the offensive line for the Falcons.

Jones spent the 2019 season as the co-special teams coordinator and tight ends coach at Colorado State University. Under his tutelage, the CSU special teams units made major improvements from the previous season, including the program's net punting, which elevated from 88th nationally to sixth, and punt return coverage, which moved from 129th nationally to 33rd. He directly oversaw the punt and kickoff units when Ryan Stonehouse was named first-team All-Conference at punter. Additionally, Trey McBride was named first-team All-Conference after leading the league in catches by a tight end (45), yards (560) and touchdowns (four).

In 2018, he coached tight ends at The Air Force Academy. He also served as the offensive tackles & tight ends coach at Coastal Carolina from 2012-18 and served as punt coordinator from 2014-2017.

Jones was a four-year letterman at the University of Georgia from 2003-06. He was named second-team All-SEC at center, was elected co-captain in 2006, and earned Offensive MVP and the Coaches Leadership Award for the Bulldogs as a senior. The Bowdon, Ga., native was also the recipient of the Leon Farmer Strength and Conditioning Award and was chosen for the Academic Roundtable for excellence in the classroom and on the field.

Following his collegiate career, Jones played for the Seattle Seahawks from 2007-09 before beginning his coaching career at the University of Georgia as an offensive graduate assistant in 2010.

Jones and his wife, Katie, have one son, Deuce, and one daughter, Kennedy.

JONES' COACHING BACKGROUND

2024-Present	Assistant Offensive Line | Atlanta Falcons
2021-23	Offensive Assistant | Los Angeles Rams
2020	Diversity Coaching Fellow | Atlanta Falcons
2019	Co-Special Teams Coordinator/Tight Ends | Colorado State
2018	Tight Ends Coach | Air Force Academy
2012-18	Offensive Tackles/Tight Ends/Punt Coordinator | Coastal Carolina
2010-11	Offensive Graduate Assistant | Georgia

STEVEN KING
SPECIAL TEAMS ASSISTANT

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 3
SEASONS IN NFL: 3

Steven King was named a special teams assistant on Feb. 2, 2024.

King originally joined the Falcons coaching staff as a diversity coaching fellow/special teams in 2022 and will return to special teams in 2024 after serving as an offensive assistant for Atlanta in 2023.

In 2023, the Falcons offense eclipsed 400 total yards of offense on six occasions, tied for the fourth-most games by a Falcons offense, behind the 2018 (nine games), 2016 (eight games) and 2014 (seven games) teams. The unit recorded eight games with more than 375 yards of total offense, sixth in the NFL.

In 2022, Atlanta was one of two teams to have special teams units score multiple touchdowns during the season – a Lorenzo Carter scoop and score off of a blocked punt in Week 2 and a Cordarrelle Patterson 103-yard kickoff return for a touchdown in Week 11. The Falcons blocked multiple punts (Troy Andersen – Week 2; Richie Grant – Week 17) for the first time in a season since at least 2000. Ade Ogundeji also recorded his second-career blocked field goal, blocking a Justin Tucker field goal in Baltimore in Week 16.

Patterson's 103-yard kickoff return for a touchdown was the ninth of his career, setting a new NFL record for the most career kickoff return touchdowns in NFL history. Patterson would be named NFC Special Teams Player of the Week in Week 11. Additionally, second-year returner Avery Williams returned 18 punts for 292 yards and led the NFL with 16.2 yards per punt return in 2022 (min. 15 att.).

KING'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2024-Present	Special Teams Assistant | Atlanta Falcons
2023	Offensive Assistant | Atlanta Falcons
2022	Diversity Coaching Intern | Atlanta Falcons
2019-21	Special Teams Quality Control | University of North Carolina
2016-18	Wide Receivers/Special Teams | Bucknell University
2014-15	Graduate Assistant | University of Nevada
2012-13	Running Backs Coach | Wagner College
2011	Wide Receivers | Nassau Community College
2007-10	Special Teams/Running Backs/ Defensive Backs | East Meadow (N.Y.) High School

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COACHING STAFF

Atlanta kicker Younghoe Koo closed the 2022 season making 12-of-12 field goal attempts, including three from 50-plus, earning NFC Special Teams Player of the Month for December and January.

King came to Atlanta having spent three seasons (2019-21) as a special teams quality control coach at the University of North Carolina.

Prior to his time with the Tar Heels, King spent three seasons (2016-18) at Bucknell University where he coached wide receivers and served as the special teams coordinator for his final two seasons.

In 2017, King participated in the NFL's Bill Walsh Diversity Fellowship with the Oakland Raiders, working primarily with special teams.

King spent two seasons (2014-15) at Nevada where he coached the wide receivers in the 2014 season and then the nickelbacks in 2015 season.

The Hempstead, N.Y., native has also coached at East Meadow (N.Y.) High School from 2007-10, Nassau Community College in 2011, Wagner College from 2012-13, and the University of Nevada from 2014-15.

King was a four-year letterman at the University of Buffalo, where he served as a team captain and led the team in rushing touchdowns in each of his final three seasons. Top of FormBottom of Form

KEVIN KOGER
TIGHT ENDS

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 2
SEASONS IN NFL: 7

Kevin Koger was named Atlanta Falcons tight ends coach on Feb. 2, 2024.

In his first season in Atlanta, Atlanta's offense ranked sixth in the league with 369.82 yards per game, fifth in passing yards per game (239.3) and 10th in rushing yards per game (130.5). Koger worked with Kyle Pitts as he recorded a single-season high in touchdowns (four) and recorded 47 receptions for 602 yards. He also worked with free agent addition Charlie Woerner, who totaled a career-best seven receptions while making an impact in run and pass blocking for the offense.

Koger joined Atlanta's coaching staff after spending three seasons (2021-23) as tight ends coach for the Los Angeles Chargers.

In 2023, Koger coached tight end Donald Parham Jr. to career highs in receptions (27), receiving yards (285) and receiving touchdowns (four). Gerald Everett caught 51 passes in 2023, the second-most receptions in a single season in his career. His 51 receptions were eighth among tight ends in the AFC and second on the team, behind only Keenan Allen with 108.

In his first two seasons (2021-22) with Los Angeles, Koger was part of an offensive staff that produced a top-five passing offense and top-10 total offense each year. The Chargers offense ranked third in passing offense (269.6 yards per game) and ninth in total offense (359.3 yards per game) in 2022. Despite injuries, his tight ends combined for 83 receptions on the season, 10th among tight end groups in the NFL in 2022. Koger coached Everett to career bests with 58 receptions and 555 yards on the season, while tying a single-season career high with four touchdown catches.

In 2021, Koger was part of an offensive staff that coached the unit to the AFC lead in passing offense (282.4), ranked fourth in the NFL in total offense (390.2) and No. 5 in the league in scoring offense (27.9 points per game). The tight ends combined for eight of quarterback Justin Herbert's record-setting 38 passing touchdowns. Jared Cook emerged as a reliable threat for Herbert, moving the chains on 13 of his 15 receptions on third and fourth downs. The offensive unit set single-season team records for first downs (401) and passing touchdowns (38) in 2021.

The Toledo, Ohio, native joined the Chargers after two seasons (2019-20) as an offensive quality control coach with the Packers, helping Green Bay secure back-to-back appearances in the NFC Championship Game. As a primary assistant to then-Packers Offensive Coordinator Nathaniel Hackett in Green Bay, Koger also contributed to the instruction of the tight ends group, helping develop Robert Tonyan to break out in 2020 with 52 catches for 586 yards and 11 receiving scores, which led all NFL tight ends in touchdown catches.

Koger was an All-Ohio selection as a senior at Toledo Whitmer High in Toledo, Ohio. He went on to play collegiately at the University of Michigan and graduated in 2012 with a bachelor's degree in sport management. Koger was a four-year letter-winner (2008-11) and three-year starter, logging 47 games played with 30 starts at tight end. He was voted a team captain entering his senior season and ended his Wolverines career by earning honorable mention All-Big Ten recognition from the conference coaches and the media. Koger was featured on the preseason watch list for the John Mackey Award as a junior, which is annually given to the top tight end in college football.

Following his graduation from Michigan in 2012, Koger spent one season coaching the tight ends and wide receivers at Saline (Mich.) High. He then broke into the collegiate coaching ranks at his alma mater, the University of Michigan, in 2013. In two seasons in Ann Arbor, Mich., Koger's graduate assistant role featured work with the tight ends group and contributions to the special teams units. His work involved the development of 2013 All-Big Ten Freshman Team selection Jake Butt, who went on to later win the John Mackey Award.

Koger spent one season (2015) as an offensive quality control coach at the University of Tennessee. In his lone season in Knoxville, Tenn., primarily working with the wide receivers and offensive line, the Volunteers posted a 9-4 record, with an Outback Bowl victory.

After one year with Tennessee, Koger spent three seasons at Eastern Kentucky University (2016-18), working with the wide receivers group and adding special teams coordinator responsibilities in his final season with the Colonels. In his lone season as special teams coordinator, the kickoff return unit led the Ohio Valley Conference with a mark of 23.2 yards-per-return, while the punt return unit also blocked a pair of opponent punts. Koger's first two seasons in Richmond, Ky., centered around developing the receiving corps for eventual NFL quarterback Tim Boyle, who lead the OVC in passing yards and completion percentage in 2017. That same season, Koger tutored wide receiver Ryan Markush to rank No. 2 in the conference in touchdown receptions (nine) and third in receiving yards (745), earning All-OVC recognition.

Koger and his wife, Tiffany, have three sons, Kingston, Hayes and Miles, and one daughter, Layne.

KOGER'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2024-Present	Tight Ends | Atlanta Falcons
2021-23	Tight Ends | Los Angeles Chargers
2019-20	Offensive Quality Control | Green Bay Packers
2018	Special Teams Coordinator/Wide Receivers | Eastern Kentucky
2016-17	Wide Receivers | Eastern Kentucky
2015	Offensive Quality Control | Tennessee
2013-14	Graduate Assistant | Michigan
2012	Tight Ends/Wide Receivers | Saline High School

PATRICK KRAMER
OFFENSIVE ASSISTANT

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 4
SEASONS IN NFL: 4

Patrick Kramer was named an Atlanta Falcons offensive assistant on Feb. 27, 2023, after spending two seasons (2021-22) as a football analyst on Atlanta's staff.

In 2023, the Falcons offense eclipsed 400 total yards of offense on six occasions, tied for the fourth-most games by a Falcons offense, behind the 2018 (nine games), 2016 (eight games) and 2014 (seven games) teams. The unit recorded eight games with more than 375 yards of total offense, sixth in the NFL last season. Kramer came to Atlanta after spending three seasons as a senior offensive analyst and assistant quarterbacks coach at Notre Dame (2018-20). In his role, Kramer was responsible for weekly opponent breakdowns and control of the defensive scout team, among others.

Prior to Notre Dame, Kramer was the offensive quality control coach and assistant quarterbacks coach at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga in 2017 and coached wide receivers at John Carroll University in 2016.

A native of Solon, Ohio, Kramer earned a Bachelor of Arts & Science from John Carroll University in University Heights, Ohio, in 2016.

KRAMER'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2023-Present	Offensive Assistant | Atlanta Falcons
2021-22	Football Analyst | Atlanta Falcons
2018-20	Senior Offensive Analyst/Asst. Quarterbacks | Notre Dame
2017	Offensive Quality Control/Assistant Quarterbacks | Tennessee-Chattanooga
2016	Wide Receivers | John Carroll University

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DWAYNE LEDFORD
RUN GAME COORDINATOR/ OFFENSIVE LINE

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 5
SEASONS IN NFL: 5

Dwayne Ledford joined the Falcons on Jan. 22, 2021, and spent three seasons as the team's offensive line coach before adding the title of run game coordinator on Jan. 31, 2024.

In 2024, Atlanta's offensive line blocked for an offense that ranked sixth in the league with 369.82 yards per game, fifth in passing yards per game (239.3) and 10th in rushing yards per game (130.5). Ledford also guided guard Chris Lindstrom to a third-consecutive Pro Bowl appearance and second-team All-Pro accolades. In 2024, Atlanta again posted a top-10 rushing attack and eclipsed 100 yards in 12 games, including a 227-yard rushing game in Week 18 vs. Carolina.

Second-year running back Bijan Robinson had a breakout campaign, with a career-high 304 rushes for 1,456 yards and 14 rushing touchdowns, in addition to 61 receptions for 431 yards and one touchdown. His 14 rushing touchdowns in 2024 were the most by a Falcon since Michael Turner in 2008. Robinson also became the second-fastest Falcon (32 games) to reach 3,000 scrimmage yards in a career behind just William Andrews (31 games). He was also the first Falcon to rush for two touchdowns in three consecutive games (Weeks 16-18) since Jamal Anderson in 1998. He was the only player in the NFL to have rushed for multiple touchdowns in three consecutive games in 2024.

In 2023, the Falcons boasted a top-10 rushing offense averaging 127 yards per game and eclipsing 100 yards in 11 games. Atlanta totaled 657 of its 2,159 rushing yards before contact and averaged 1.33 yards before contact per rush. Atlanta's offense totaled 400-or-more yards in six games tied for the fourth most by a Falcons offense. Running behind the Falcons offensive line, Robinson led all rookies with 976 rushing yards and Andrews' (1,332) franchise record for yards from scrimmage by a rookie with 1,463.

The Falcons ran for more than 100 yards in 27 games behind their offensive line from 2022-23. Atlanta is the first team in NFL history to have rookies in three consecutive seasons top 1,000 scrimmage yards, with Robinson and Tyler Allgeier accomplishing the feat in 2023 and 2022 respectively. Atlanta's line also protected quarterbacks Desmond Ridder and Taylor Heinicke in 2023, surrendering 40 sacks on 599 dropbacks. Ridder also ranked tied for fourth with five rushing touchdowns on the season.

Ledford's unit has been anchored by established veterans in Lindstrom, Kaleb McGary and Jake Matthews, who holds the franchise record by starting 178 straight games dating back to his rookie season in 2014. Alongside those veterans, Ledford has overseen the development of center Ryan Neuzil and 2023 rookie Matthew Bergeron, a starter in all 17 games.

In 2022, Atlanta offense led the NFL in fewest penalties, finished third in the NFL in rushing yards per game and 10th in third-down conversion rate. Atlanta also had the third-highest successful play rate on rushing attempts, based on EPA, at 45.1 percent. The Falcons rushing attack averaged 74.5 more rushing yards per game in 2022 than it did in 2021, resulting in the largest one-season improvement by any team since at least 2001. With Cordarrelle Patterson (340), Allgeier (324), Marcus Mariota (280) and Caleb Huntley (265), the Falcons became the first team to have four players with at least 250 rushing yards through the first eight games of a season in NFL history. Additionally, Allgeier surpassed Andrews (1,023 in 1979) for the most rushing yards by a rookie in franchise history and became the sixth rookie selected in the fifth round-or-later to eclipse 1,000 rushing yards over the past 20 seasons. Patterson also set single-season career highs for rushing yards (695) and rushing touchdowns (eight).

In his first season in Atlanta, Patterson set then single-season career highs in rushing yards and rushing touchdowns behind Atlanta's offensive line. Additionally, Lindstrom was the only guard to appear in all 17 games and not allow a single sack in the NFL in 2021.

Prior to joining Atlanta, Ledford spent two seasons (2019-20) at Louisville as the offensive coordinator/ offensive line coach. In 2020, the Cardinals posted 2,686 passing yards and 2,200 rushing yards while averaging 29.5 points per game. In 2019, his offense was averaging 33.1 points per game and had a 1,500-yard rusher (Javian Hawkins) and 1,200-yard receiver (Tutu Atwell). The team had four offensive players named to All-ACC team; Atwell (first-team), OT Mekhi Becton (first-team), Hawkins (second-team) and AP Hassan Hall (second-team).

Before Louisville, Ledford spent three seasons at NC State, where he helped construct the Wolfpack's offensive lines into one of the best units in the ACC. He spent two seasons as the offensive line coach and run game coordinator and added the associate head coach title his final year with the Wolfpack. Senior Garrett Bradbury was a consensus All-American earned Associated Press All-America honors and won the Rimington Trophy as the nation's top center. Bradbury and left tackle Tyler Jones both made the All-ACC team this season. It was the first time since 1974 the Pack had two from the offensive linemen on the first-team.

The Wolfpack had a 1,000-yard rusher in each season of Ledford's tenure. NC State went from 2002 to 2015 without a 1,000-yard rusher, which was the longest drought in the country. In three seasons directing the offensive line, the Wolfpack saw their sack total decrease, ranking among the top 20 in the country.

Ledford arrived in NC State after four seasons coaching the offensive line at Appalachian State, and three years as co-offensive coordinator for the run game. The Mountaineers set a Sun Belt single-season record with 11 wins in 2015, the team's first full year of FBS eligibility, and his offense ranked fourth in the FBS in sacks allowed in 2015 with just 0.85 per game, and paved the way for a 271.5 yard rushing average, which ranked sixth nationally.

Before joining the Appalachian State staff in 2012, Ledford spent one season as the offensive line coach and run game coordinator at Gardner-Webb and one season as the offensive line coach at Tennessee State.

Ledford's first coaching job came while he was still playing in the NFL, as he served as a strength and conditioning coach at North Carolina in 2005 and as an offensive line intern with the Frankfurt Galaxy of NFL Europe in the spring of 2006.

A seven-year NFL veteran, Ledford played for the San Francisco 49ers (1999-2000, 2003-04), Jacksonville Jaguars (2000), Carolina Panthers (2001), Cleveland Browns (2005) and New Orleans Saints (2006).

Following his playing career, he was named the Galaxy's tight ends and tackles coach in the spring of 2007 before returning to the U.S. to serve as the offensive line coach at Sanderson High in Raleigh, N.C., that fall. He spent two seasons as a graduate assistant coach at his alma mater, East Carolina (2008-09), working with the offensive line and guiding the Pirates to back-to-back Conference USA titles.

Ledford played defensive line at ECU from 1995-97, starting all 11 games as a junior and finishing with 26 career tackles. He moved to offensive line prior to his senior campaign and made nine starts at left tackle in 1998 and was named a 1998-99 National Strength and Conditioning All-American.

A native of Marion, N.C., Ledford and his wife, Meredith, have two sons, Hudson and Jordan.

LEDFORD'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2024-Present	Run Game Coordinator/OL | Atlanta Falcons
2021-23	Offensive Line | Atlanta Falcons
2019-20	Offensive Coordinator/OL | Louisville
2018	Assoc. HC/Offensive Line/Run Game Coord. | North Carolina State
2016-17	Offensive Line/Run Game Coord. | North Carolina State
2013-15	Co-Offensive Coord./OL | Appalachian State
2012	Offensive Line | Appalachian State
2011	Offensive Line/Run Game Coord. | Gardner-Webb
2010	Offensive Line | Tennessee State
2008-09	Grad Assistant | East Carolina

NATE OLLIE
DEFENSIVE LINE

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 1
SEASONS IN NFL: 7

Ollie was named the Atlanta Falcons defensive line coach on Jan. 24, 2025.

Ollie comes to Atlanta after spending the 2024 season with the Houston Texans, serving as the assistant defensive line coach. He helped a defensive line unit that finished tied for fourth in the NFL in sacks (49.0), sixth in yards per game (315.0), fourth in yards per play (5.1) and seventh in third down percentage (35.9). The group's 49.0 sacks set a new franchise record for sacks in a season. Ollie guided DE Danielle Hunter to his fifth Pro Bowl selection after finishing the season with a team-high 17 tackles for loss and 12 sacks. Hunter's 17 tackles for loss and 12.0 sacks both ranked among the top five in the AFC.

Prior to the Texans, Ollie spent two seasons (2022-23) as the defensive line coach of the Indianapolis Colts. In 2023, Ollie helped the defensive line unit finish fifth in the NFL in sacks (51.0), setting a new single-season franchise record during the Indianapolis era (since 1984). The Colts also finished fifth in tackles for loss (94). Under Ollie's tutelage, DT DeForest Buckner was named to his third Pro Bowl after finishing with 8.0 sacks. The defense also finished tied for fifth in forced fumbles (17).

In 2022, the Colts rush defense allowed the fifth-fewest rushing yards per attempt (4.13). They also finished in the top 10 in the league in sacks (44.0- tied-10th), tackles for loss (91- fifth), forced fumbles (13 - tied-eighth), fumble recoveries (11 - tied-fourth), opponent negative plays (31 - fifth), third down

OLLIE'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2025	Defensive Line | Atlanta Falcons
2024	Assistant Defensive Line | Houston Texans
2022-23	Defensive Line | Indianapolis Colts
2021	Assistant Defensive Line | New York Jets
2019-20	Assistant Defensive Line | Philadelphia Eagles
2018	Defensive Line | Eastern Kentucky
2017	Interim Defensive Line | University of Tennessee
2015-17	Graduate Assistant | University of Tennessee

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percentage (37.95 - 10th) and opponent three-and-out percentage (22.3 - eighth).

In 2021, Ollie served as the assistant defensive line coach for the Jets. He coached DE John Franklin-Myers to single-season career highs in solo tackles (17), tackles for loss (six), sacks (6.0) and interceptions (one). He became the first Jets' defensive lineman to record 6.0 sacks and an interception in a single season since 2013 (Muhammad Wilkerson).

Prior to New York, Ollie was with the Eagles as their assistant defensive line coach for two seasons (2019-20). He mentored a group that tallied 72.0 sacks, which was the second most by a defensive line unit during that time frame. Ollie guided DT Fletcher Cox (2019-20) and DE Brandon Graham (2020) to Pro Bowl selections.

Before entering the NFL ranks, Ollie coached collegiately at Eastern Kentucky for one season (2018) as the defensive line coach after working at the University of Tennessee for three seasons (2015-17). While at Tennessee, he served as a graduate assistant (2015-17), including the interim defensive line coach in 2017. Ollie worked with Texans DE Derek Barnett, who surpassed Reggie White for the most sacks in school history (33.0).

After graduating from Ball State, he started his coaching career as an assistant coach at Yorktown Middle School in 2014.

As a player, Ollie appeared in 46 games at Ball State (2010-13) and was a three-time All-MAC selection. He finished his career with 178 tackles (66 solo), 15.0 sacks, one pass defensed, one forced fumble and three fumble recoveries.

Ollie is a native of Chicago, Ill., and is married to his wife, Ambria.

MICHAEL PITRE
RUNNING BACKS

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 4
SEASONS IN NFL: 6

Michael Pitre was hired as the Atlanta Falcons running backs coach on Jan. 31, 2022.

In 2024, Atlanta boasted a top-10 rushing attack for the third consecutive season, averaging 130.5 rushing yards per game. Second-year running back Bijan Robinson had a breakout campaign, with a career-high 304 rushes for 1,456 yards and 14 rushing touchdowns, in addition to 61 receptions for 431 yards and one touchdown. His 14 rushing touchdowns in 2024 were the most by a Falcon since Michael Turner in 2008. Robinson also became the second-fastest Falcon (32 games) to reach 3,000 scrimmage yards in a career behind William Andrews (31 games). He was also the first Falcon to rush for two touchdowns in three consecutive games (Week 16-Week 18) since Jamal Anderson in 1998. He was the only player in the NFL to have rushed for multiple touchdowns in three consecutive games in 2024. Running back Tyler Allgeier finished the season with rushing for 644 yards on 137 carries and three touchdowns. Since entering the league in 2022, Allgeier is one of six players in the NFL to not have a fumble in their career with 533 carries.

In 2023, Pitre led a running backs group that helped the Falcons finish ninth in rushing offense, with the unit averaging 127.0 yards per game. Atlanta's offense recorded 11 games with at least 100 yards on the ground, tied for eighth-most in the NFL. Pitre was instrumental in Robinson's record-breaking start to the NFL. Robinson set the franchise record for the most yards from scrimmage by a rookie in franchise history with 1,463 yards on the season, surpassing Andrews (1,332 in 1979). He also set the franchise record for most receptions by a rookie running back with 58. With Robinson's 1,463 yards from scrimmage, the Falcons became the first team in NFL history to have a 1,000-yard rookie in three consecutive seasons with Tyler Allgeier in 2022 and Kyle Pitts in 2021. Allgeier also set a single-season career high of four rushing touchdowns in 2023.

In his first season as the Falcons running backs coach in 2022, Atlanta's offense led the NFL in fewest penalties, finished third in the NFL in rushing yards per game and 10th in third-down conversion rate. Atlanta also had the third-highest successful play rate on rushing attempts, based on EPA, at 45.1 percent. The Falcons rushing attack averaged 74.5 more rushing yards per game in 2022 than it did in 2021, resulting in the largest one-season improvement by any team since at least 2001.

With Cordarrelle Patterson (340), Allgeier (324), Marcus Mariota (280) and Caleb Huntley (265), the Falcons became the first team to have four players with at least 250 rushing yards through the first eight games of a season in NFL history. Additionally, Allgeier surpassed Andrews (1,023 in 1979) for the most rushing yards by a rookie in franchise history and became the sixth rookie selected in the fifth round-or-later to eclipse 1,000 rushing yards over the past 20 seasons. Patterson also set single-season career highs for rushing yards (695) and rushing touchdowns (eight).

Pitre arrived in Atlanta having most recently served as the running backs coach for the Chicago Bears. In 2021, the Bears' rushing attack averaged 118.7 rushing yards per game – the 14th highest in the NFL last season. Chicago's backs tallied 54 carries of 10-plus yards and 13 carries for 20-plus yards – tied for the seventh most in the league in 2021. Bears running back David Montgomery rushed for 849 yards on 225 carries (3.8 avg.) and seven touchdowns in 13 games last season.

Prior to his time in Chicago, Pitre spent three years (2018-20) at Oregon State where he served as the running backs coach and recruiting coordinator. In three seasons under Pitre, the Beavers' rushing attack averaged 165.8 yards per game, 4.5 yards per carry and 59 rushing touchdowns.

Under Pitre, Jermar Jefferson – the Associated Press' Co-Offensive Pac-12 Player of the Year in 2020 – earned the Beavers' rushing titles in both 2018 (1,380) and 2020 (858) while also leading the entire offense in touchdowns during both seasons (2018 - 12; 2020 - 7).

Prior to his arrival at Oregon State, Pitre coached running backs at Montana State from 2014-17. In his final season at MSU, the Bobcats led the Big Sky Conference and ranked seventh nationally in yards per game (249.5). Collectively, the Bobcats ranked among the Top 20 FCS rushing teams in each of Pitre's four seasons with the team, including a pair of Top 10 finishes.

Pitre received his start at the collegiate level working as a graduate assistant at the University of Colorado from 2012-13. The Buffs' rushing attack finished above 100.0 yards per game in each of Pitre's two years in Boulder. Primarily working with running backs and the offensive line, Pitre oversaw the development of NFL offensive lineman David Bakhtiari (2012) and running back Phillip Lindsay (2013).

Pitre played fullback at UCLA from 2003-07 where he was a three-year starter, appearing in 36 games and totaling 406 all-purpose yards on 58 touches (7.0 avg.) with four touchdowns. He was a team captain in 2006.

PITRE'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2022-Present	Running Backs | Atlanta Falcons
2021	Running Backs | Chicago Bears
2018-20	Running Backs/Recruiting Coordinator | Oregon State
2014-17	Running Backs | Montana State
2012-13	Graduate Assistant/Running Backs | Colorado
2009-11	Defensive Assistant | Servite HS
2009	Scouting Intern | New England Patriots
2008	Running Backs | Rancho Santa Margarita HS

MIKE RUTENBERG
DEFENSIVE PASS GAME COORDINATOR

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 1
SEASONS IN NFL: 16

Mike Rutenberg was named defensive pass game coordinator on Jan. 24, 2025.

He joined the Falcons after spending four seasons (2021-24) as linebackers coach for the New York Jets and brought 15 years of NFL experience to the club.

In his time in New York, Rutenberg was part of the only defense in the league to rank in the top five of total defense in each of the three seasons (2022-24), finishing fourth in 2022 before finishing third in both 2023 and 2024. Over the three seasons combined, the Jets' defense ranked No. 1 in total defense (305.7 yards per game), No. 1 in passing defense (183.5 yards per game), No. 5 in tackles for loss (269), No. 8 in sacks (136) and No. 9 in scoring defense (21.1 points per game). In addition to finishing third in total defense in 2024, the Jets defense was fourth in passing defense, allowing only 192.6 yards per game while ranking seventh in sacks per pass attempt at a rate of 8.25 percent.

RUTENBERG'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2025	Defensive Pass Game Coordinator | Atlanta Falcons
2021-24	Linebackers | New York Jets
2020	Passing Game Specialist | San Francisco 49ers
2018-19	Assistant Linebackers | Jacksonville Jaguars
2016-17	Defensive Assistant | Jacksonville Jaguars
2013-15	Assistant Defensive Backs | Jacksonville Jaguars
2013	Defensive Coordinator | University of San Diego
2012	Passing Game Coord./DBs | New Mexico State
2009-11	Defensive Backs | New Mexico State
2007-08	Graduate Assistant/Defense | UCLA
2006	Intern | UCLA
2004-05	Assistant to Head Coach | Washington Commanders
2003	Player Personnel Intern | Washington Commanders

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COACHING STAFF

In 2023, Rutenberg helped linebacker Quincy Williams earn First Team All-Pro and Team MVP honors, becoming the only First Team All-Pro on defense who joined his team via waiver claim since 2000. Additionally, under Rutenberg's lead, Williams became one of six players since 2015 to record at least 100 tackles (139), 10 tackles for loss (15), and 10 passes defensed (10) on the season.

Team captain C.J. Mosley recorded his third consecutive season with at least 150 tackles (152) in 2023, finishing eighth in the league. Rutenberg helped him become one of just 11 players since 2000 with 150 tackles in at least two consecutive seasons (2022-23) and one of just five with 150+ in three straight (2021-23).

During the 2022 season, Rutenberg coached a duo in Mosley and Williams who became one of eight linebacker pairs in the NFL to each record 100+ tackles and the only duo with back-to-back 100+ tackle seasons, after doing so in 2021 as well.

Rutenberg helped Mosley reach his fifth Pro Bowl selection and first as a Jet, in addition to receiving Second Team All-Pro honors. Mosley became one of only four players in the NFL in 2022 to record 12 games with nine+ tackles. Additionally, his 158 tackles marked his sixth season registering at least 100+ tackles.

With Rutenberg's lead, Williams became one of four players in the NFL in 2022 with 200+ tackles, 5.0+ sacks, five+ passes defensed, and three+ forced fumbles.

With the Jets coaching in the 2022 Senior Bowl, Rutenberg served as the National Team's defensive coordinator.

In his first season with the Jets (2021), Rutenberg saw career years from Pro Bowl veteran Mosley and Williams, a third-year player claimed by the Jets prior to the start of the regular season. The pair became one of just eight linebacker tandems in 2021 with 100+ tackles each.

Mosley, who returned after opting out of the 2020 season and missing all but two games the year before was a Pro Bowl alternate and Team MVP after he finished fourth in the League with a single-season best 168 tackles. Williams, who entered 2021 with 18 games played (eight starts) in his first two seasons, posted single-season bests in tackles (107), sacks (2.0), passes defensed (five) and tackles for loss (nine), becoming one of just five players in 2021 with 100+ tackles, nine+ TFLs and five+ PDs.

Prior to joining the Jets, Rutenberg was the passing game specialist (2020) with the 49ers. In his only season with San Francisco, he helped the defense finish fourth in passing defense while also ranking in the top 10 in both completion percentage and passer rating allowed.

Coaching college football for seven seasons, first with UCLA (2006-08) and then with New Mexico State (2009-12), Rutenberg was named the defensive coordinator at the University of San Diego (2013) before he returned to the NFL with the Jaguars as assistant defensive backs coach (2013-15), then as a defensive assistant (2016-17), before serving as assistant linebackers coach (2018-19).

Rutenberg entered the league with Washington, initially as a player personnel intern (2013), before working with Joe Gibbs as a football assistant to the head coach.

A graduate of Cornell who played Spring Football, Rutenberg and his wife, Stacey, have a daughter, Laney, and a son, Luke.

BARRETT RUUD
INSIDE LINEBACKERS

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 2
SEASONS IN NFL: 2

Barrett Ruud was named Atlanta Falcons inside linebackers coach on Feb. 2, 2024.

In 2024, Ruud led a linebacker unit that allowed just 345.0 total yards per game, 224.5 passing yards per game and 120.0 rushing yards per game. The Falcons defense finished the season tied for third in the league in opponent plays of 20-or-more yards, allowing only 52 (eight rushing, 44 passing) throughout the season. Under Ruud's leadership, inside linebacker Kaden Elliss became one of only three players since 2000, and the first in Falcons history, to total a career-best 150 tackles (151), and five-or-more sacks in a single season. Elliss finished the season as one of four defensive players to record 125-or-more tackles and 3.5-or-more sacks. Inside linebacker Troy Andersen earned NFC Defensive Player of the Week honors from his Week 4 performance against the New Orleans Saints, logging 16 total tackles (nine solo), one tackle for loss and an interception returned 47 yards for a touchdown, his first career pick-six.

Ruud joined the Atlanta staff with eight years of collegiate coaching experience, having most recently served as the inside linebackers coach at his alma mater, the University of Nebraska, from 2018-22.

In 2022, Ruud led a linebacker group that helped the Nebraska defense limit its opponents to only 313.3 yards per game, register 39 sacks and record the third-best third-down percentage (37.9 percent) in the Big Ten West. Under Ruud's guidance, linebacker Luke Reimer led Nebraska in tackles with 86, despite missing a pair of games due to injury, en route to being named an All-Big Ten honorable mention for his second-consecutive season.

Linebackers Reimer and Nick Henrich flourished under Ruud's coaching in 2021, helping Nebraska allow just 22.7 points per game, the best by a Husker defense in 11 seasons. Nebraska's 366.0 yards per game allowed also marked its best total in five years. Reimer led Nebraska with 109 tackles, including five double-figure tackle games with 16 tackles against Buffalo and 19 against Purdue. Reimer also recorded six tackles for loss, broke up six passes, forced three fumbles and was an honorable-mention All-Big Ten selection. Henrich nearly joined Reimer in reaching 100 tackles, registering 98 tackles in his first full season as a starter. Henrich had three games with double-figure tackles, including a career-high 15 stops against Michigan.

Ruud adeptly rotated inside linebackers in 2020 as the Huskers battled injuries. Linebacker Will Honas led the group with 57 tackles, 6.5 tackles for loss and three sacks on his way to all-conference honors. Collin Miller recorded 27 tackles in four games before a neck injury ended his playing career. Reimer made 40 tackles and five tackles for loss, while redshirt freshman Henrich moved inside late in the season and finished the year with 27 tackles. Ruud's linebacker group was instrumental in helping Nebraska rank sixth in the Big Ten in total defense.

In Ruud's second season with the Huskers in 2019, Nebraska's top three tacklers were inside linebackers. Mohamed Barry led the team in tackles for the second straight season with 89 stops, while Honas was second with 73 tackles, and Miller finished third on the team with 67 tackles. Barry earned All-Big Ten honors for the second straight season.

In his first season as inside linebackers coach in 2018, Ruud's unit helped Nebraska improve by 27 spots in the national scoring defense rankings from the 2017 season and by 61 spots in pass efficiency defense. Both of Ruud's starting inside linebackers put together impressive seasons in 2018, with Barry leading the team with 112 tackles, the best by a Husker linebacker since All-American Lavonte David had 133 tackles in 2011. Barry ranked second in the Big Ten in tackles per game and earned all-conference accolades. Dedrick Young II also had a career high in tackles in his lone season with Ruud as his position coach. Young totaled a career-high 83 tackles in 2018 to end his career with 284 tackles, the fifth-highest total in Nebraska history. In addition to his career high in tackles, Young also broke up a career-high five passes and intercepted the first pass of his career.

Prior to Nebraska, Ruud spent two seasons (2016-17) as a quality control administrator at the UCF after beginning his coaching career as a defensive intern at Nebraska in 2014. Rudd helped the Knights to a 13-0 record in 2017, the nation's only unbeaten team, won the American Athletic Conference title and the Peach Bowl. The Knights were also among the top teams in the nation in takeaways, with 58 takeaways in 2016 and 2017, ranking third among FBS schools in that span.

As a player, Ruud was selected by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the second round (36th overall) of the 2005 NFL Draft. In his eight-year NFL career, he recorded 658 tackles, seven interceptions, six sacks and six forced fumbles in 113 games for the Buccaneers, Tennessee Titans and Houston Texans. At Nebraska, Ruud finished with a program-record 432 tackles. He earned freshman All-America honors in 2001, third-team All-America honors in 2004 and was a three-time All-Big 12 selection.

A Lincoln, Neb., native, Ruud and his wife, Jenna, have two sons, Brooks and Hudson, and one daughter, Jaimes.

RUUD'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2024-Present	Inside Linebackers | Atlanta Falcons
2018-22	Linebackers | Nebraska
2016-17	Quality Control Administrator | UCF
2014	Defensive Intern | Nebraska

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COACHING STAFF

LANCE SCHULTERS
DEFENSIVE ASSISTANT

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 4
SEASONS IN NFL: 6

Lance Schulters was named Atlanta Falcons defensive assistant on Feb. 3, 2024.

This marks Schulters' third stint with Atlanta's coaching staff, having previously served as a special teams intern from 2015-16 and a defensive assistant in 2020.

In 2024, Schulters helped the Falcons' defensive back unit finish the season tied for third in the league in opponent plays of 20-or-more yards, allowing only 52 (44 passing, eight rushing,) throughout the season. He also helped guide safety Jessie Bates III as he totaled 10 passes defensed, four interceptions, one fumble recovery, a career-high four forced fumbles and one sack. Bates was the only player in the NFL to record both four interceptions and four forced fumbles in 2024. Additionally, cornerback A.J. Terrell Jr. allowed only 10 receptions for 114 yards on 21 targets in 114 coverage snaps in Weeks 13-18, the second-fewest receptions allowed by any player over that span.

In 2021, Schulters served as a coaching assistant for the Super Bowl champion Los Angeles Rams, aiding the defensive back unit. Schulters was promoted to defensive assistant for the 2022 season. Under Schulters guidance, cornerback Jalen Ramsey was named first-team All-Pro in 2021 and to the Pro Bowl in both 2021 and 2022.

Prior to his stint with the Rams, Schulters spent the 2015 and 2016 season as a special teams intern for the Falcons. In that time, kicker Matt Bryant went 48-for-55 (87.3%) on field goal attempts and 82-for-83 (98.8%) on extra point attempts in that span. Bryant also went 6-for-8 on field goal attempts of 50-or-more yards on the season.

Schulters began his coaching career in 2011 when he served as defensive backs coach at Bryant University.

As a player, Schulters was selected by the San Francisco 49ers in the fourth round of the 1998 NFL Draft. Playing safety over his 10-year career, he spent time with the Tennessee Titans, Miami Dolphins, Atlanta Falcons and New Orleans Saints, and was named to the Pro Bowl in 1999. Additionally, the Hofstra University alum was named to the school's Hall of Fame in 2013.

SCHULTERS' COACHING BACKGROUND

2024-Present	Defensive Assistant | Atlanta Falcons
2022	Defensive Assistant | Los Angeles Rams
2021	Coaching Fellow | Los Angeles Rams
2020	Defensive Assistant | Atlanta Falcons
2015-16	Special Teams Intern | Atlanta Falcons
2011	Defensive Backs Coach | Bryant University

JACQUIES SMITH
OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 2
SEASONS IN NFL: 2

Jacquies Smith was named the Atlanta Falcons' outside linebackers coach on Feb. 22, 2024.

In 2024, Smith helped the Falcons pass rush to 31 total sacks and 71 quarterback hits on 184 pressures on the season. Atlanta's defense had the longest active streak in the NFL of recording three-or-more sacks in a game, having hit the mark in each of the Falcons four matchups from Weeks 13-16. Under Smith's leadership, OLB Arnold Ebiketie recorded the fifth-most sacks in the NFL over the final six weeks of the season, totaling five sacks in Weeks 13-18. Ebiketie matched his career-high in sacks from the 2023 season with six total and 12 quarterback hits.

Smith joined the Falcons after spending the 2023 season as an assistant edge coach at Texas, where he helped the Longhorns defense to rank second in the Big 12 in sacks (32) and tackles for loss (85). Prior to joining the staff at Texas, Smith specialized in pre-draft training for draft-eligible players.

Smith played five seasons (2014-18) in the NFL, appearing in 37 games (18 starts) for the Buccaneers, Lions and Raiders. Over his career, Smith recorded 43 tackles (30 solo), 26 quarterback hits, 13.5 sacks, 10 tackles for loss, four forced fumbles, four fumble recoveries, three passes defensed and one defensive touchdown.

As a defensive end at Missouri, Smith played four seasons (2008-11) for the Tigers, recording 142 tackles (77 solo), 21 tackles for loss, 9.5 sacks, nine passes defensed, five forced fumbles, three fumble recoveries and two defensive touchdowns (one interception and one fumble recovery). In 2010, Smith earned second-team All-Big 12 honors after registering 35 tackles, 10 tackles for loss and 5.5 sacks.

SMITH'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2024-Present	Outside Linebackers | Atlanta Falcons
2023	Defensive Ends | Nevada
2023	Assistant Edge | Texas

JOHN TIMU
DEFENSIVE ASSISTANT

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 2
SEASONS IN NFL: 5

John Timu was named Atlanta Falcons defensive assistant on Feb. 3, 2024.

In 2024, Timu helped the Falcons pass rush register 31 total sacks and 71 quarterback hits on 184 pressures. Atlanta's defense had the longest active streak in the NFL of recording three-or-more sacks in a game, having hit the mark in each of the Falcons four matchups from Weeks 13-16. Outside linebacker Arnold Ebiketie recorded the fifth-most sacks in the NFL over the final six weeks of the season, totaling five sacks in Weeks 13-18.

Timu joined the Atlanta staff after spending three seasons (2021-23) with the Los Angeles Chargers where he served in a variety of roles, including assistant defensive line coach (2023), defensive assistant (2022) and as the Alex G. Spanos Coaching Fellow in 2021.

In 2023, Timu helped coach a defensive unit that finished the season with 48 sacks, tied for seventh in the NFL. Since 2000, the Chargers' 48 sacks are the second-most in a single season in franchise history (61 in 2006). Timu helped coach edge rusher Khalil Mack, who finished fourth in the NFL with 17 sacks, setting a single-season career high and matching the Chargers single-season franchise sack record. Mack also earned Pro Bowl honors for the second consecutive season, the eighth of his career. Timu also aided in the development of rookie edge rusher, Tuli Tuipulotu, as he finished the season with 53 tackles (37 solo), 12 quarterback hits (tied for fourth among rookies), eight tackles for loss (tied for fourth among rookies), 4.5 sacks (tied for sixth among rookies), two forced fumbles (tied for first among rookies), one fumble recovery and one pass defense.

Timu assisted the defensive line in his second season with the Bolts in 2022, helping tutor a line that recorded 11.5 of the team's 40 sacks, led by defensive linemen Morgan Fox (6.5) and Sebastian Joseph-Day (two). Joseph-Day ranked tied for second in the AFC with nine tackles for loss and was just the third interior defensive lineman in the last 15 years to post 50 tackles, eight tackles for loss and an interception in a single season. The group was part of a defensive unit that had the best third-and-short defense in the NFL, allowing conversions on a league-low 48.6 percent of the time on third-and-one or third-and-two situations.

In his first year with the Bolts in 2021, Timu aided the coaching staff in the defense's transition to a 3-4 base front scheme, primarily contributing to the organization and day-to-day operation of the defensive coaching staff, specifically the defensive line and linebackers. As a unit, the Chargers' defense ranked third in the NFL with a conference-best 19 forced fumbles.

Timu joined the Chargers after spending two seasons (2019-20) as a graduate assistant at his alma mater, the University of Washington. In a condensed 2020 season, Washington finished the season as Pac-12 Conference North Division Champions. In his first season returning to the Pacific Northwest, Washington finished with an 8-5 record, capping the campaign by beating Boise State in the Las Vegas Bowl.

Before joining the coaching ranks, Timu played three NFL seasons (2015-17) for the Chicago Bears, appearing in 29 career games (nine starts) at linebacker. In a 2015 win at Tampa Bay, he had six tackles and recovered two fumbles, becoming the first Bears defender to record multiple fumble recoveries in a single game since 2012. Timu also spent time with the Salt Lake Stallions of the Alliance of American Football in early 2019.

TIMU'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2024-Present	Defensive Assistant | Atlanta Falcons
2023	Assistant Defensive Line | Los Angeles Rams
2022	Defensive Assistant | Los Angeles Chargers
2021	Alex G. Spanos Coaching Fellow | Los Angeles Chargers
2019-20	Graduate Assistant | Washington

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Timu was a three-year starting linebacker at Washington, earning honorable mention All-Pac-12 recognition following his senior season in 2014. That year, he led the Huskies with 108 total tackles, while adding 10 passes defensed and two interceptions, including one he returned 63 yards for a touchdown.

The Long Beach, Calif., native and his wife, Amanda, have three sons — Asaiah, Jireh and Jaxxon.

D.J. WILLIAMS
QUARTERBACKS

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 3
SEASONS IN NFL: 8

D.J. Williams was promoted to quarterbacks coach on Feb. 13, 2025. He served as offensive assistant/assistant quarterbacks coach for the Falcons in the 2024 season.

Serving as offensive assistant/assistant quarterbacks coach in 2024, Williams worked with quarterback Kirk Cousins and rookie quarterback Michael Penix Jr. In 14 starts, Cousins completed 303-of-453 passes (66.9 percent) for 3,508 yards, 18 passing touchdowns and 16 interceptions for a 88.6 passer rating. In five appearances (three starts), Penix completed 61-of-105 passes for 775 yards, three touchdowns and three interceptions for a 78.9 passer rating.

Williams helped guide quarterback Kirk Cousins to a franchise record in both completions (42) and passing yards (509) in Week 5. Cousins became the 13th player to pass for at least 500 yards and four touchdowns in a single game in NFL history, and the first since Joe Burrow did so in Week 16 of 2021. In the same game, he threw for 253 yards in the first half and 256 yards in the second half plus overtime, making him the only NFL quarterback in the Super Bowl Era to throw for 250-plus yards in the first and second half of a game, per OptaSTATS. Cousins earned two NFC offensive player of the week accolades, both in October wins over Tampa Bay, earning the honor again after completing 23-of-29 passes for 276 yards and four touchdowns for a passer rating of 145.9, his highest since 2017.

Penix completed 18-of-27 passes for 202 yards in his first career start, securing a 34-7 win over the New York Giants. In his second career start in Week 17, he threw his first NFL touchdown pass on fourth down with 1:23 remaining in the fourth quarter, with the following extra point tying the game at 24 and leading to overtime. In Week 18, Penix joined running back Bijan Robinson and wide receiver Drake London to make the Falcons the only team in NFL history with a 300-yard passer, 175-yard receiver and 150-yard rusher each under the age of 25 in the same game.

Williams joined the Falcons in 2024 after spending five seasons (2019-23) as an offensive assistant with the New Orleans Saints. Prior to joining the Saints staff, Williams assisted New Orleans during training camp in 2017. He also worked with the club's coaches and football operations department in 2018.

In 2023, Williams helped Saints quarterback Derek Carr complete 375-of-548 attempts (68.4 percent) for 3,878 yards, 25 touchdowns and eight interceptions with a 97.7 passer rating in his first season in New Orleans. Carr finished the season top 10 among quarterbacks in completions, passing touchdowns and passer rating.

Williams graduated from Grambling State in 2015, where he played quarterback for the Tigers from 2011-14, starting contests in all four seasons and earning tryouts with several NFL teams following the conclusion of his collegiate career. Williams is the son of Washington Commanders executive Doug Williams, who won Super Bowl XXII, making him the first black quarterback in NFL history to both start and win a Super Bowl.

From 2019-21 and in 2023, Williams participated in the NFL/Black College Football Hall of Fame Quarterback Coaching Summit. He served as the National Team quarterbacks coach at the 2023 Senior Bowl.

WILLIAMS' COACHING BACKGROUND

2025 ..... Quarterbacks | Atlanta Falcons
2024 ..... Offensive Assistant/Assistant Quarterbacks | Atlanta Falcons
2019-23 ..... Offensive Assistant | New Orleans Saints

T.J. YATES
PASSING GAME COORDINATOR

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 5
SEASONS IN NFL: 7

T.J. Yates joined the Falcons on Jan. 30, 2021, and spent one season as passing game specialist (2021) and two as wide receivers coach (2022-23) before transitioning to quarterbacks coach in 2024. Yates was promoted to passing game coordinator on Feb. 13, 2024.

In 2024, Atlanta's offense ranked sixth in the league with 369.8 yards per game, fifth in passing yards per game (239.3) and 10th in rushing yards per game (130.5) Serving as quarterbacks coach, Yates guided quarterback Kirk Cousins to a franchise record in both completions (42) and passing yards (509) in the Week 5 win over Tampa Bay. Cousins became the 13th player to pass for at least 500 yards and four touchdowns in a single game in NFL history, and the first since Joe Burrow did so in Week 16 of 2021. In the same game, he threw for 253 yards in the first half and 256 yards in the second half plus overtime, making him the only NFL quarterback in the Super Bowl Era to throw for 250-plus yards in the first and second half of a game, per OptaSTATS. Cousins earned two offensive player of the week accolades, both in October wins over Tampa Bay, earning the honor again after completing 23-of-29 passes for 276 yards and four touchdowns for a passer rating of 145.9, his highest since 2017.

Michael Penix Jr. completed 18-of-27 passes for 202 yards in his first career start, securing a 34-7 win over the New York Giants. In his second career start in Week 17, he threw his first NFL touchdown pass on fourth down with 1:23 remaining in the fourth quarter, with the following extra point tying the game at 24 and leading to overtime. In Week 18, Penix joined running back Bijan Robinson and wide receiver Drake London to make the Falcons the only team in NFL history with a 300-yard passer, 175-yard receiver and 150-yard rusher each under the age of 25 in the same game.

As wide receivers coach in 2023, Yates worked with London as he broke Julio Jones' (133) club record for receptions through a player's first two seasons with 141. London's 1,771 receiving yards over his first two years ranked second to Jones (2,157) and the USC product led the Falcons in yards and receptions in each of his first two seasons. London caught 69 passes for a career-high 906 yards with two touchdowns. He was Atlanta's most productive receiver and was targeted on nearly a quarter of the Falcons pass plays.

In 2022, Yates' first season as wide receivers coach, London finished his rookie season with 72 receptions for 866 yards and four touchdowns, surpassing Kyle Pitts (68 in 2021) for the most receptions by a rookie in franchise history.

Yates joined the Falcons coaching staff after spending two seasons (2019-20) working with the Houston Texans. In 2020, he served as the assistant quarterbacks coach. Yates spent the 2019 season as an offensive assistant helping the Texans capture an AFC South title after a 10-6 regular season. Houston defeated the Buffalo Bills in the Wild Card Round and advanced to the Divisional Round for the fourth time in team history.

Yates spent seven seasons in the NFL as a quarterback playing for the Texans (2011-13, 2015, 2017), Falcons (2014), Dolphins (2016), and Buffalo Bills (2017). He was originally selected by the Texans in the fifth round (152nd overall) of the 2011 NFL Draft and went on to start five regular-season games and both postseason games that season. He completed 11-of-20 passes for 159 yards and one touchdown in the Wild Card Playoff Round vs. Cincinnati in the franchise's first postseason game and postseason victory.

Yates appeared in 13 games with five starts over three seasons with the Texans before being traded to the Falcons where he spent one season backing up Matt Ryan. Yates returned to Houston in 2015 and appeared in four games with two starts. After spending time with the Dolphins and Bills, he returned for a third stint with the Texans in 2017 and threw a career-high four touchdowns in four games played.

Prior to his NFL career, Yates was a four-year starter at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, N.C. He set records for most completions and passing yards in a single game, single season and career. He also became the first quarterback in school history to record more than 3,000 passing yards in a single season and was named Honorable-Mention All-ACC as a senior in 2010.

A Marietta, Ga. native, Yates and his wife, Amy, have two sons, Carter and Bear, and a daughter, M.J.

YATES' COACHING BACKGROUND

2025 ..... Passing Game Coordinator | Atlanta Falcons
2024 ..... Quarterbacks | Atlanta Falcons
2022-23 ..... Wide Receivers | Atlanta Falcons
2021 ..... Passing Game Specialist | Atlanta Falcons
2020 ..... Asst. Quarterbacks | Houston Texans
2019 ..... Offensive Assistant | Houston Texans

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KEN ZAMPESE
SENIOR OFFENSIVE ASSISTANT

SEASONS WITH FALCONS: 1
SEASONS IN NFL: 26

Ken Zampese was named Atlanta Falcons senior offensive assistant on Feb. 3, 2024.

The 2024 Falcons offense finished No. 6 in total offense in 2024 (369.8 yd/g), a marked improvement from the unit's No. 17 ranking in 2023. Atlanta also boasted a top-10 rushing attack for the third consecutive season, averaging 130.5 rushing yards per game. The unit eclipsed 500 yards of total offense twice in 2024, tied for the second-most in the league. Atlanta totaled 6,287 yards of total offense in 2024, the team's highest total since the 2016 season.

Zampese joined the Falcons from the Washington Commanders where he spent four seasons. In 2023, Zampese worked as senior offensive assistant/game management after spending the previous three seasons as the Commanders quarterbacks' coach. He has served in a variety of coaching roles with several NFL teams including Washington, Cleveland (2018), Cincinnati (2003-17), St. Louis (2000-02), Green Bay (1999), and Philadelphia (1998).

In 2021, he worked with Taylor Heinicke helping the quarterback pass for 3,419 yards with 20 touchdowns in 16 games. Under Zampese's guidance, Heinicke had seven games with a passer rating of 90-or-better and five games with two-or-more touchdown passes. In 2020, Zampese worked with Alex Smith who posted a 5-1 record as a starter and was named the AP Comeback Player of the Year.

Prior to his time in Washington, Zampese split time in 2019 with the Atlanta Legends and the University of Florida after spending the 2018 season with the Browns. In Cleveland, he guided first- overall pick Baker Mayfield to an impressive rookie season, setting an NFL rookie record with 27 touchdown passes in just 13 games. Mayfield led all rookies in passing yards (3,725), passing touchdowns (27), completion percentage (63.79) and passer rating (93.7) that season.

Zampese was the offensive coordinator for the Cincinnati Bengals for the 2016 season where the team fielded a top-13 unit, averaging 356.9 yards per game. Prior to being named the offensive coordinator, Zampese spent the previous 13 seasons as the Bengals quarterbacks coach, working with Jon Kitna, Carson Palmer and Andy Dalton. Under Zampese's tutalege, Kitna was named AP Comeback Player of the Year and PFWA Most Improved Player in 2003. Palmer earned back-to-back Pro Bowl selections in 2005 and 2006, while Dalton was named to Pro Bowls in 2011, 2014, and 2016.

Zampese joined the Bengals after three seasons in St. Louis. In 2001, he was the club's wide receivers coach as the Rams led the NFL in passing yards. The next season, he added passing game coordinator to his responsibilities with the Rams finishing second in the league in passing.

Zampese spent time as an offensive assistant with the Rams (2000), and Green Bay Packers (1999), after getting his NFL start as an offensive assistant with the Philadelphia Eagles in 1998. Prior to working in the NFL, he spent nine seasons as a college coach, including two seasons as quarterbacks coach and passing game coordinator at Miami (Ohio) and four seasons at Northern Arizona, where he was offensive coordinator (1995) and wide receivers coach (1992-94). Zampese began his coaching career as a graduate assistant at the University of San Diego (1988-89), followed by serving as a graduate assistant at USC (1990-91).

Zampese played wide receiver and kick returner at the University of San Diego from 1985-88, and was the team's Special Teams Player of the Year as a senior. He earned an undergraduate degree in business from San Diego and later received a master's degree in adult education from Southern California.

ZAMPESE'S COACHING BACKGROUND

2024-Present	Senior Offensive Assistant | Atlanta Falcons
2023	Sr. Offensive Asst./Game Management | Washington Commanders
2020-22	Quarterbacks | Washington Commanders
2019	Defensive Analyst | Florida
2019	Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks | Atlanta Legends
2018	Quarterbacks | Cleveland Browns
2016-17	Offensive Coordinator | Cincinnati Bengals
2003-15	Quarterbacks | Cincinnati Bengals
2002	Passing Game Coordinator | St. Louis Rams
2001	Wide Receivers | St. Louis Rams
2000	Offensive Assistant | St. Louis Rams
1999	Offensive Assistant | Green Bay Packers
1998	Offensive Assistant | Philadelphia Eagles
1996-97	QBs/Passing Game Coordinator | Miami (Ohio)
1995	Offensive Coordinator | Northern Arizona
1992-94	Wide Receivers | Northern Arizona
1990-91	Graduate Assistant | Southern California
1988-89	Graduate Assistant | San Diego

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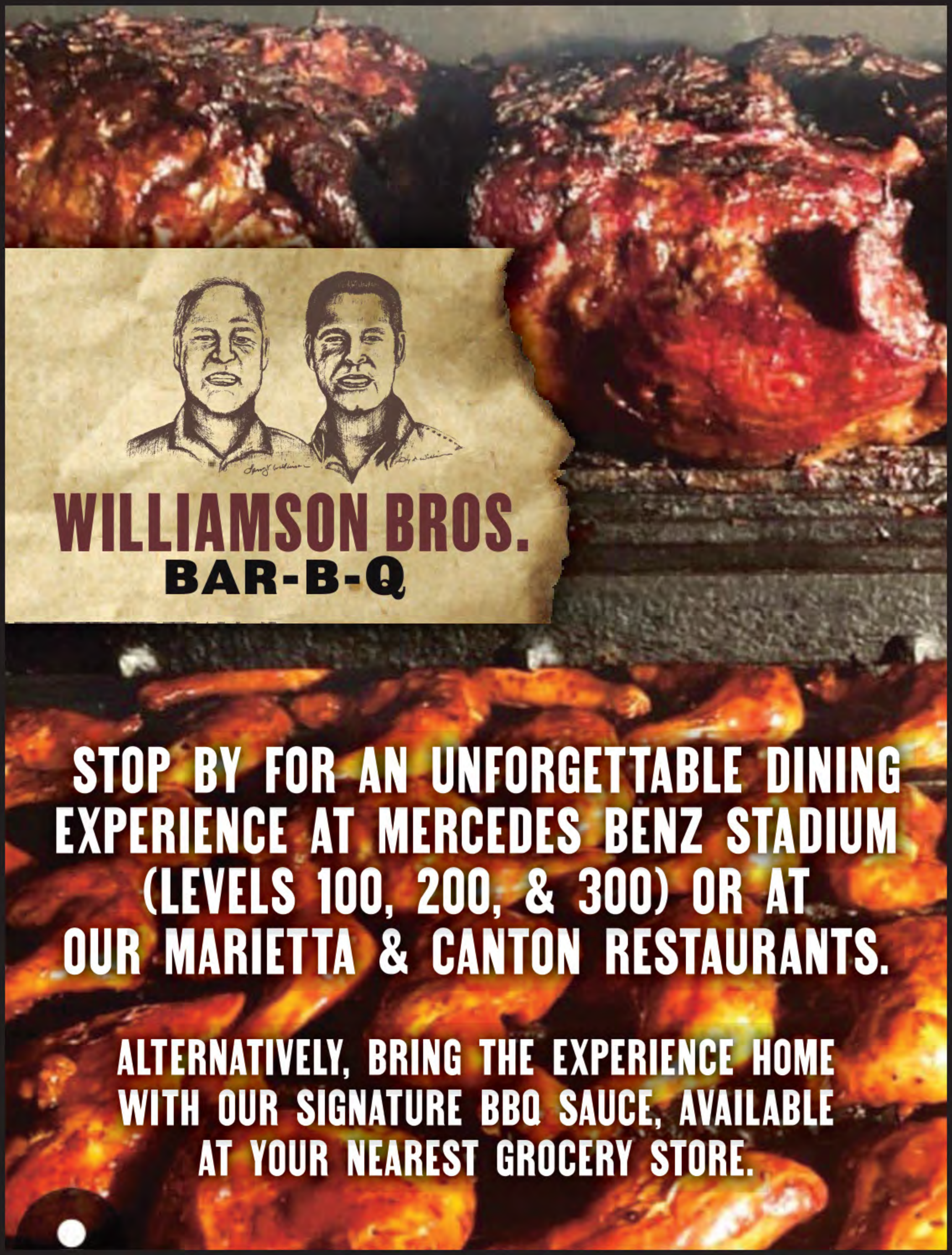
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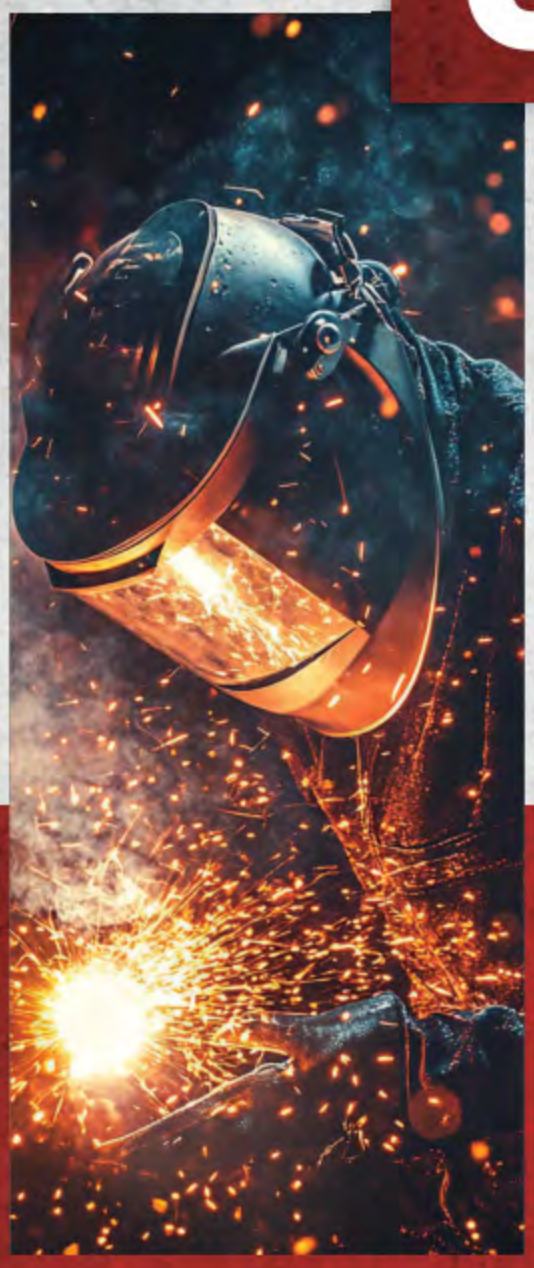

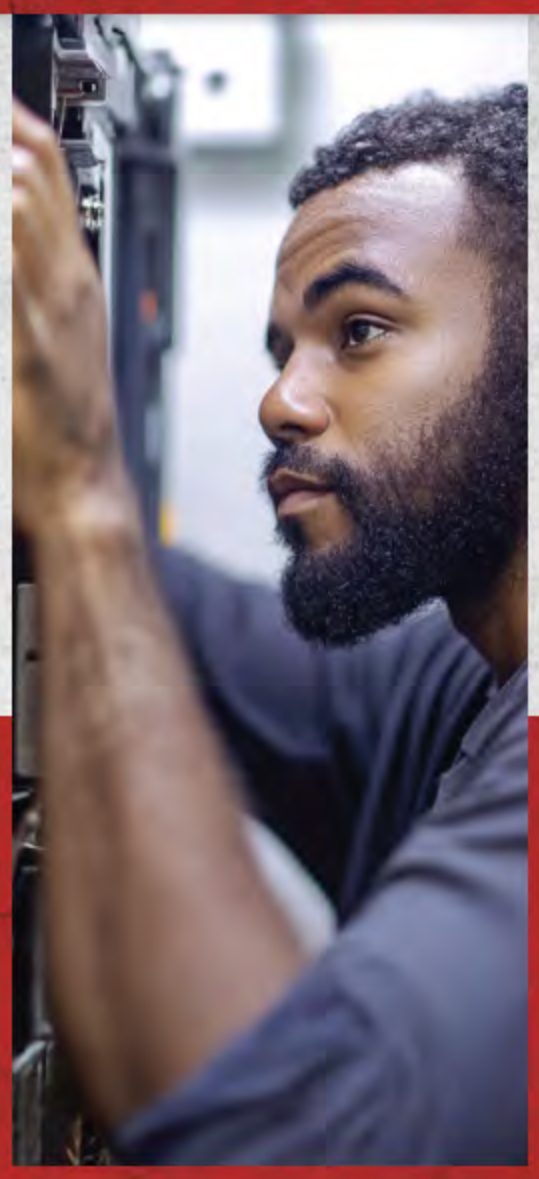
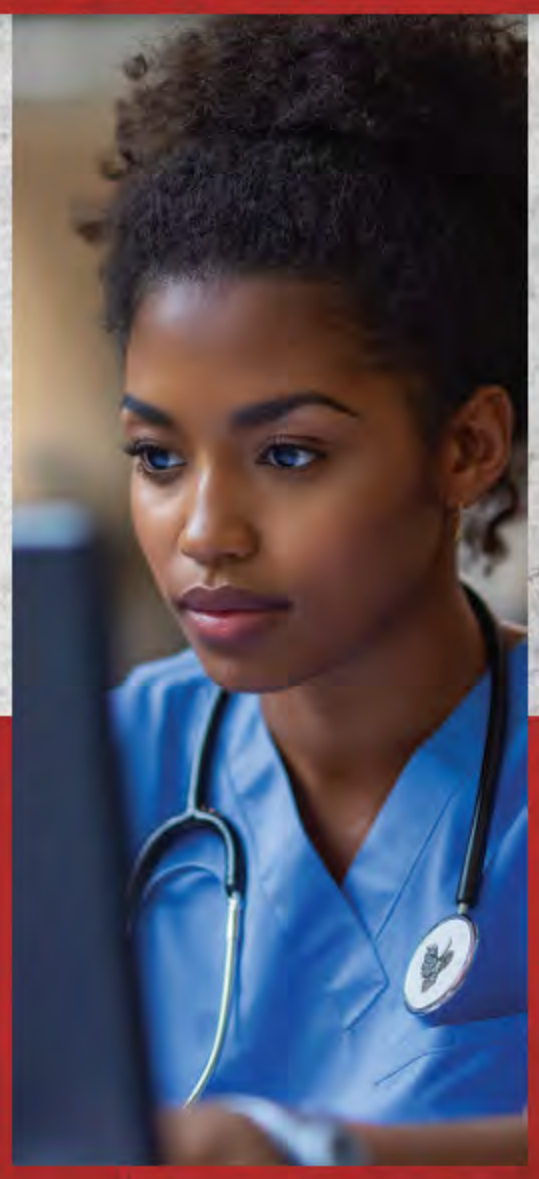

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DEE ALFORD

DEE ALFORD

Position	Experience	Age
CB	4	27

HT/WT	College
5-11/180	Tusculum

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Position	Experience	Age
RB	4	25

HT/WT	College
5-10/225	BYU

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Position	Experience	Age
ILB	4	26

HT/WT	College
6-4/245	Montana State

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JESSIE BATES III

JESSIE BATES III

Position	Experience	Age
S	8	28

HT/WT	College
6-1/210	Wake Forest

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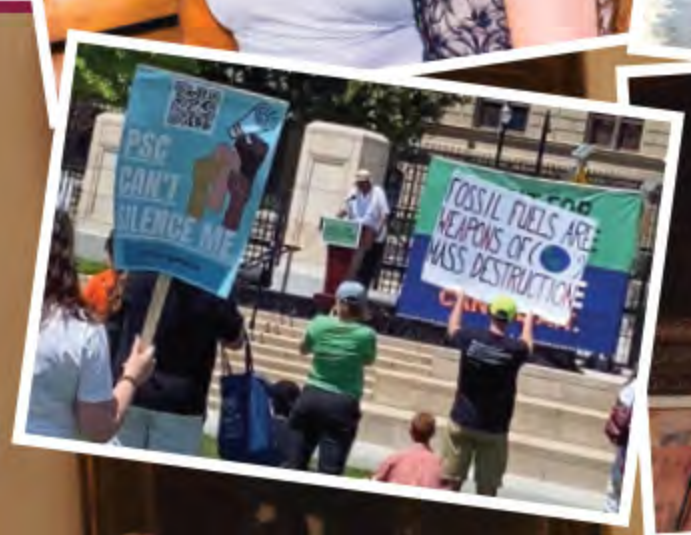

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Position	Experience	Age
OL	3	25

HT/WT	College
6-5/315	Syracuse

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Position	Experience	Age
LB	5	26

HT/WT	College
6-3/223	Virginia Tech

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Position	Experience	Age
EDGE	4	26

HT/WT	College
6-2/250	Penn State

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KADEN ELLISS

KADEN ELLISS

Position	Experience	Age
ILB	7	30

HT/WT	College
6-2/240	Idaho

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Position	Experience	Age
WR	8	31

HT/WT	College
6-2/210	Prairie View A&M

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Position	Experience	Age
CB	8	28

HT/WT	College
5-10/190	UCF

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Position	Experience	Age
K	8	31

HT/WT	College
5-10/195	Georgia Southern

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CHRIS LINDSTROM

Position	Experience	Age
G	7	28

HT/WT	College
6-4/310	Boston College

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Position	Experience	Age
WR	4	24

HT/WT	College
6-4/215	USC

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Position	Experience	Age
T	12	33

HT/WT	College
6-5/310	Texas A&M

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RAY-RAY MCCLOUD III

RAY-RAY MCCLOUD III

Position	Experience	Age
WR	8	28

HT/WT	College
5-9/185	Clemson

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Position	Experience	Age
T	7	30

HT/WT	College
6-6/330	Washington

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Position	Experience	Age
WR	6	27

HT/WT	College
5-11/180	Tulane

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RYAN NEUZIL

RYAN NEUZIL

Position	Experience	Age
OL	4	28

HT/WT	College
6-3/305	Appalachian State

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Position	Experience	Age
DL	10	32

HT/WT	College
6-4/310	Manitoba (Canada)

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Position	Experience	Age
DL	2	23

HT/WT	College
6-4/295	Clemson

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MICHAEL PENIX JR.

MICHAEL PENIX JR.

Position	Experience	Age
QB	2	25

HT/WT	College
6-3/220	Washington

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BRADLEY PINION

BRADLEY PINION

Position	Experience	Age
P	11	31

HT/WT	College
6-5/265	Clemson

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KYLE PITTS SR.

KYLE PITTS SR.

Position	Experience	Age
TE	5	24

HT/WT	College
6-6/250	Florida

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BIJAN ROBINSON

BIJAN ROBINSON

Position	Experience	Age
RB	3	23

HT/WT	College
5-11/215	Texas

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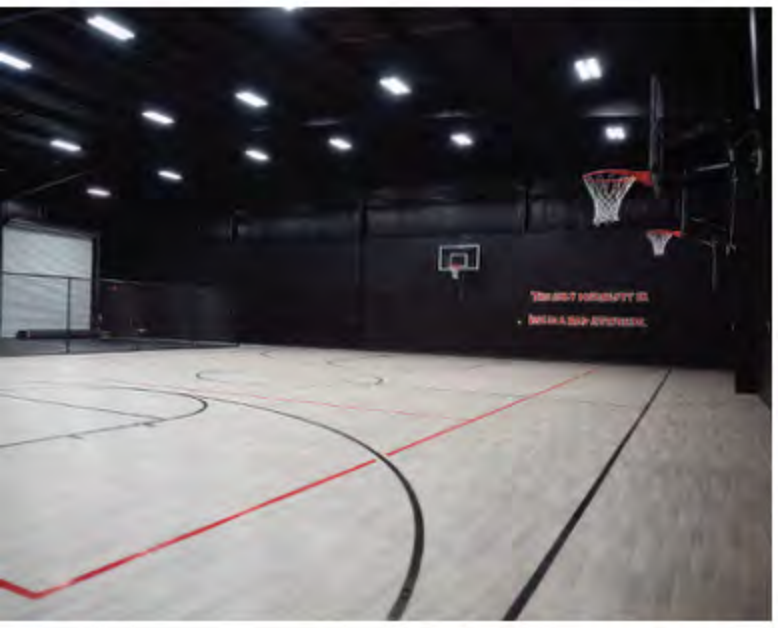

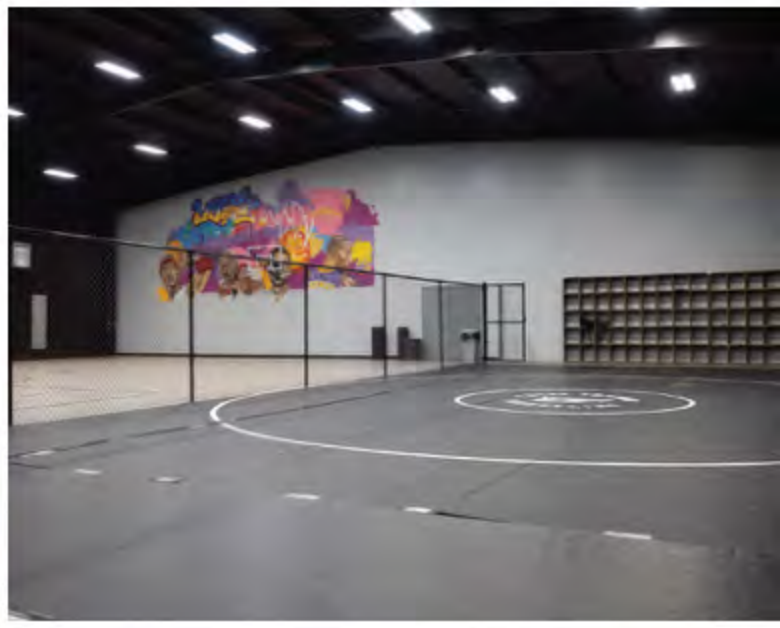

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A.J. TERRELL JR.

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Position	Experience	Age
CB	6	26

HT/WT	College
6-1/200	Clemson

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CHARLIE WOERNER

CHARLIE WOERNER

Position	Experience	Age
TE	6	27

HT/WT	College
6-5/250	Georgia

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Position	Experience	Age
DB	Rookie	22

HT/WT	College
5-10/194	Oklahoma

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JACK NELSON

Position	Experience	Age
OL	Rookie	23

HT/WT	College
6-7/314	Wisconsin

JAMES PEARCE JR.

Position	Experience	Age
EDGE	Rookie	21

HT/WT	College
6-5/243	Tennessee

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JALON WALKER

Position	Experience	Age
EDGE	Rookie	21

HT/WT	College
6-2/245	Georgia

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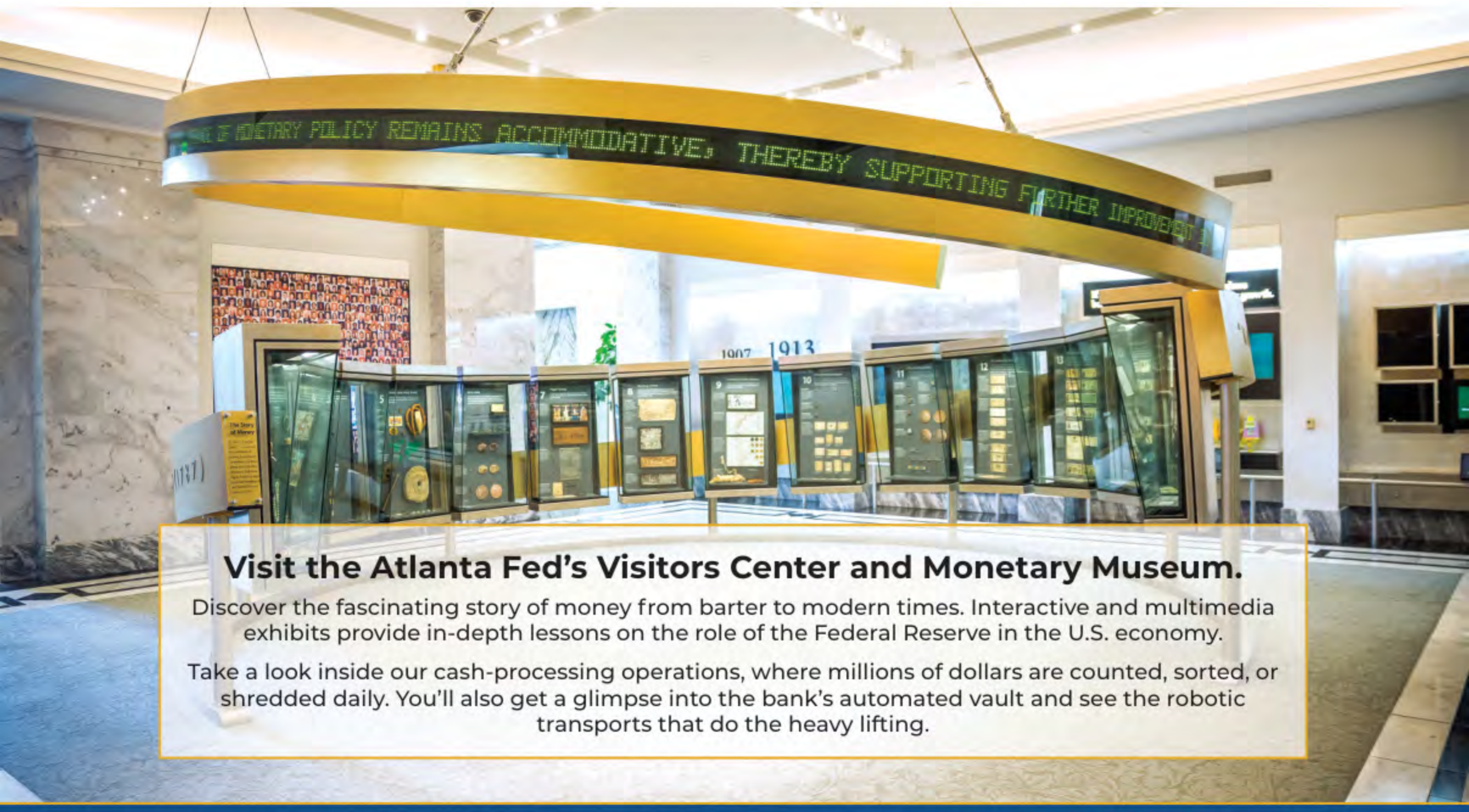

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XAVIER WATTS

Position	Experience	Age
S	Rookie	23

HT/WT	College
6-0/203	Notre Dame

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HOMESICK:

How Charlie Woerner handled living cross-country for 4 years

Story by Terrin Waack

Behind him, muffled noises from family and friends sporadically escaped the house and into the otherwise quiet night as Charlie Woerner stood in the middle of his parents' driveway, taking a moment away from the ongoing celebration inside to absorb all that happened in the last few hours.

Charlie's arms wrapped around his fiancé, Sydney Gilliam. Hers encircled his waist. They hugged wordlessly, heads tipped to the sky. Stars shone as far as they could see.

With each collective breath, a steady rise and fall of their touching chests, the reality of what's to come settled in.

"We're going to San Francisco," Sydney said. "This is wild. Like where is that on a map? That is so far away from here."

Earlier that Saturday evening of April 25, 2020, Charlie received a call that would change the trajectory of their shared life for the next four years. Well, technically, Charlie missed the call and dialed back on Sydney's phone. The refurbished device Charlie recently bought off eBay to replace his broken one didn't maintain service all too well in the country.

When it finally did connect, that call was with the San Francisco 49ers. They used the No. 190 overall pick in the sixth round of the 2020 NFL Draft to select Charlie, a tight end from the University of Georgia.

"I never thought I'd be drafted, to be honest with you," Charlie said. "To be drafted was just, 'Whoa, I got drafted.' I was wanted.

"I wouldn't say that San Francisco hit me until later."

Charlie was born and raised in the tiny town of Tiger, Georgia, which has a population of 400-500 people and is located 100-plus miles northeast of Atlanta. All of his grade schools were located on the same campus, including Rabun County High School.

Then, Charlie remained in state for college, sticking to his UGA commitment despite a coaching change before his arrival and multiple offers from other big-time programs. That's where he met Sydney, who's originally from Hendersonville, North Carolina. Both chose to stay within a three-hour drive of home.

Relocating to California would be their first time living not just an airplane ride away from their support system but a cross-country trip no less.

"It didn't seem scary at all," Sydney said, "at that point."

—2020 & 2021—

After a quick 1-2 step in the narrow hallway, Sydney Woerner jumped into her husband's arms. Charlie caught her easily; one arm braced behind her lower back, the other looped under her legs. With a quick kiss, he carried his wife across the threshold of their first apartment together.

The two tied the knot on June 27, 2020, in Sydney's hometown. Shortly after, Charlie left for the 49ers' training camp. It wasn't until September that Sydney joined him in San Jose, California.

> "CHARLIE PROBABLY **IMPACTED ME MORE** AS A COACH AND A MAN **THAN ANY PLAYER EVER HAS.**" -KIRBY SMART

When she did arrive, the newlyweds weren't the only ones to breathe a sigh of relief. Back in Georgia, Charlie's mother, Kathy Woerner, released the biggest exhale. She'd been stressed ever since Charlie took off.

"I was nervous he was going to get depressed," Kathy said. "At first, they said, 'You're in camp. You're not with anybody. You're all by yourself in this hotel room.' This has never happened to him before. He's never lived alone. He's always had all these people around him. Even at college, he lived in a house with like six or seven other people he chose."

Training camp normally keeps players, especially rookies, busier than usual and away from family, but guests often can attend practices. COVID-19 nixed that. The 49ers prohibited anyone non-essential at the facility.

Protocols shifted toward the regular season. Slight normalcy returned.

"I was so thankful that he was married," Kathy said. "He was going home to someone who loves him no matter where he is."

It didn't take long for Charlie and Sydney to realize exactly how different their life in California was going to be.

Sydney's visions of living in San Francisco, a coastal city with pickup beach volleyball, trendy coffee shops and colorful historic architecture, did not come to fruition. Instead, she got the concrete center of Silicon Valley with San Jose. Their view included Levi's Stadium, a three-minute drive away.

"Here in California, most real estate is taken up by buildings, especially in Silicon Valley," 49ers tight end Ross Dwelley said. "Like where I'm from in San Diego, it's beautiful. But out here, there's more apartments and businesses

and stuff. It's just a lot different than being out there (in Georgia), where it's more open space with nature."

Rent went from around $300 apiece among multiple roommates in an Athens house to $4,000 solo in a San Jose one-bedroom unit. That was a sticker shock even for a professional athlete, considering their first place was 900 square feet. And unfurnished.

Charlie and Sydney slept atop a roll-out mattress on the floor.

"Worst decision ever," Charlie said.

Every other apartment they rented – there was a new one each year – was furnished. Slightly bigger, and therefore, slightly more expensive.

The clean slate at least gave Sydney something to do amid California's strict COVID-19 restrictions. She'd order furniture from IKEA or Target.

"I was Bob the Builder up there," Sydney said.

Betty Crocker, too. Forget candles. With the cookies Sydney baked weekly for the team, the apartment always held a warm aroma.

There'd be flares of spice, too, since Sydney also often cooked homemade meals.

Breaking in the kitchen was just one step. Sydney printed and pinned pictures of family and friends throughout the apartment. She also picked out local trinkets to scatter for character.

Soon enough, it felt like home, a mix of past and present for a comfortable future.

"It used to bother me because you used to buy too many little things," Charlie said while looking at Sydney. "But after a while, I love all the little things you buy."

The first wave of true homesickness hit at Thanksgiving. Charlie, being one of seven children, was accustomed to big family dinners at his parents' house for the holiday. Sydney, with two brothers herself, understood. They'd FaceTime their families, but really, they leaned on each other to still enjoy the special occasion.

The feeling was mutual across the country.

"We have these kids, and then we think they're going to be with you for the rest of life, and then all of a sudden, they're gone," said Kent Woerner, Charlie's father. "You realize, 'Gosh, I miss him.' It's an adjustment. But I also just take into account that's the way it's supposed to be. They're supposed to leave their parents."

During those first two years, days in California were centered around Charlie and Sydney. Sure, they made friends within the 49ers organization, but the pandemic made socializing difficult.

Charlie played in 14 games as a rookie, catching three passes for 36 yards. He and Sydney purchased a house in Athens during their first offseason back in Georgia, then rented in San Jose come Charlie's second year in California. He then played in every game and caught five passes for 52 yards before undergoing back and sports hernia surgeries in the offseason.

Sydney discovered on Nov. 5, 2021, their duo was going to become a trio in 2022.

"I bought a house, I got a child coming, and I have two surgeries," Charlie said. "My career's going to be over. How am I going to pay for this house? How am I going to take care of this kid?"

What makes Charlie so special is his way to connect with people. He's always there to help obviously. That's what country boys are; they'll give you their shirt off their back. But he'll also fight to death for your friendship.
-Colton McKivitz
49ers offensive tackle

— 2022 & 2023 —

Hoisting himself up into the passenger seat of his teammate's green Ram 2500 truck, Charlie buckled in before turning to Colton McKivitz and taking the aux cord extended his way. As classic country tunes filtered through the speakers, McKivitz pulled away from Charlie's apartment complex, only a road over from his own, and off they went. Hunting time.

The location of their trips varied, depending on whether it was duck or turkey season, but they usually took off around 2:30 a.m. and did so once a week. They'd chase game all over Central Valley, which required driving anywhere between two to four hours.

Hunting allowed Charlie to feel a piece of home was with him in California. Same with McKivitz, who is from Ohio and attended college at West Virginia University.

"Good people find good people," McKivitz said. "Obviously we found each other out here, and that helped us through our careers here."

The two self-proclaimed "good old country boys" bonded when they met as locker mates in 2020. Like Charlie, McKivitz was a 49ers draft pick that year. McKivitz was chosen a round earlier than Charlie. That prompted a good deal of ribbing to break the ice.

Even though they could not be more different on paper, Charlie also quickly hit it off with Dwelley in their position room. Dwelley lived in California since he was 4 years old and signed as an undrafted free agent in 2018. He was not a good old country boy, nor was he a rookie learning the ropes. But he and Charlie clicked.

One day, Charlie would be in both McKivitz's and Dwelley's weddings. He was a groomsman for Dwelley in 2023 and best man for McKivitz in 2025.

"What makes Charlie so special is his way to connect with people," McKivitz said. "He's always there to help obviously. That's what country boys are; they'll give you their shirt of their back. But he'll also fight to death for your friendship."

> CHARLIE IS SO MATURE BEYOND HIS YEARS THAT **IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT YOU THROW AT HIM** AS FAR AS ADVERSITY IS CONCERNED; **HE'S GOING TO HANDLE IT THE RIGHT WAY.**
>
> ***-TODD HARTLEY***

That's what makes him a great son, friend, husband and – oh, yeah – father.

Henry Woerner was born July 14, 2022, in Georgia. Within a week, Charlie had to report for training camp. He missed the early newborn phase, but Sydney had her parents' assistance back home. Her mom, Kasey Gilliam, even flew with Sydney and Henry to California and helped them settle into their new apartment before the season started.

"It kind of felt like the draft in a way," Sydney said, "like a lot of life is happening really fast, so you don't have time to process it."

Navigating motherhood, especially when Charlie was at practice, was difficult. A happy surprise, however, was Sydney felt less lonely through the second half of Charlie's rookie contract than the first. She had Henry, her little buddy. He went everywhere with her.

Henry was a new and cherished addition to Charlie and Sydney's life.

"He just made everything more exciting," Sydney said.

The three of them could explore a lot more once COVID-19 restrictions lifted, too. They made it a priority to do so on Tuesdays, typically a down day in the NFL. So, they'd walk around the Redwood National and State Parks for Charlie's forest fix. They'd visit San Francisco to experience Sydney's coastal-city culture. They'd seek out playgrounds for Henry, tacking on dinner to expand the parents' roster of restaurants.

The playgrounds were the most memorable.

"It's like, 'There's no woods, so this is our humongous playground,'" Charlie said. "Those playgrounds are crazy. You don't see those here (in Tiger or Athens)."

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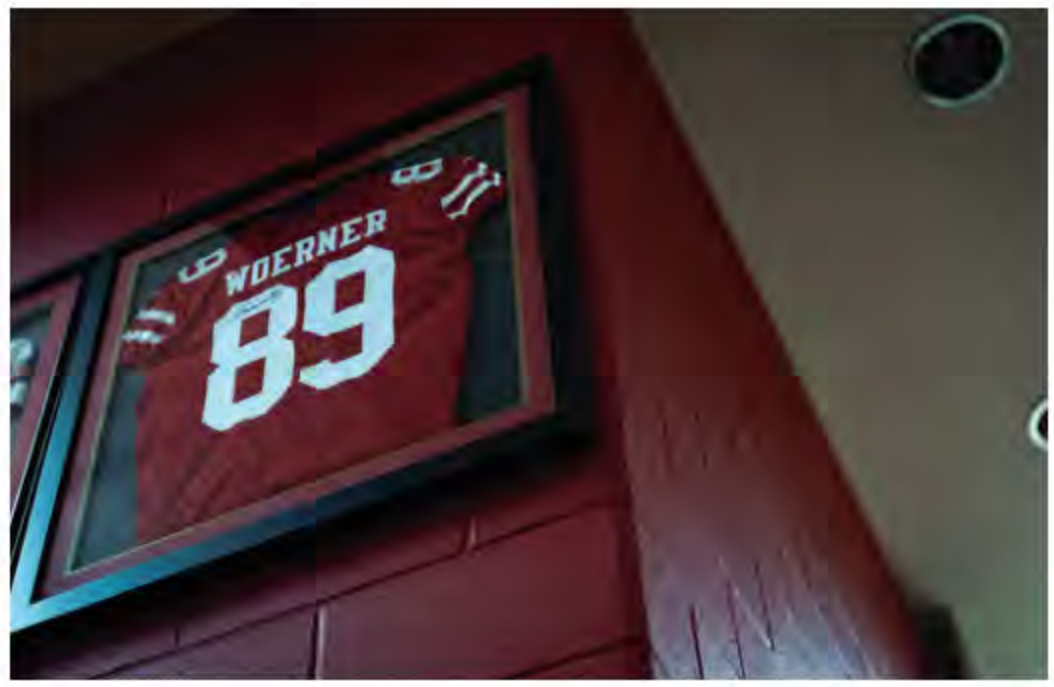

I never thought I'd be drafted, to be honest with you. To be drafted was just, 'Whoa, I got drafted.' I was wanted.
-Charlie Woerner
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The Woerners grew to love the life they built in San Jose. It may not have been what they envisioned, but they made the most of it.

Instead of getting competitive over volleyball, Charlie held poker nights with his teammates. Instead of gossiping at coffee shops, Sydney threw dinner parties with players' partners. As for the architecture, well, that no longer mattered.

"I read a book called, 'The Gospel Comes with a House Key,'" Sydney said. "It was talking about how you don't have to have an elaborate home to have people over and just do life together. Like you can have a tiny little apartment. We'd squeeze people in there."

Things were falling into place for the Woerners.

Henry was a healthy toddler.

Sydney navigated roads without a GPS.

Charlie recovered from his offseason surgeries. He had a dip in production in 2022, without a single target, but picked back up in 2023 with three receptions for 32 yards. He appeared in every game between the two seasons, including the Super Bowl in 2024. The 49ers lost to the Kansas City Chiefs, but it was a nail-biter determined in overtime.

Then, Charlie's contract expired.

"You're a part of a winning organization that has a great team culture, and you're like, 'This is awesome, and we've made great friends,'" Sydney said. "So, when you actually start to think about saying goodbye to that, you're like, 'Whoa, this is a big decision here.'"

In front of him, the squeals of delight Henry released each time he clashed and crashed his plastic toys brought a smile to Charlie's face as he watched from the driveway of their Athens home, stepping away from the makeshift construction site to answer a call from his agent.

Sydney stood by Charlie's side. This was what they'd been waiting for: Charlie was a free agent and needed a new team. An answer awaited.

With each minute that passed, Henry blissfully unaware of the situation, Sydney's nerves grew with only catching Charlie's half of the conversation.

"How do we uproot this toddler who just wants to sit in the dirt all day?" Sydney thought in the moment. "Back to the concrete life?"

They don't.

The Woerners didn't have to go anywhere.

The Atlanta Falcons offered Charlie a three-year contract worth $12 million. He accepted, signing on March 13, 2024.

"You don't just go home to go home," Charlie said. "You want to be in the right fit for you. Because being in the right fit can make you play 10, 15 years. If you go to the wrong fit and then put bad stuff on tape, your career could be done in 5, 6 years."

Charlie proved in 2024 the Falcons were the right fit. He played a career-high 457 offensive snaps and caught a personal-high seven passes for 46 yards.

A tight end's statistics don't tend to be flashy. So take it from Falcons running back Bijan Robinson, who rushed for the third-most yards last season and called Charlie the "best blocking tight end in the NFL."

Charlie's value in Atlanta is only bound to grow now that he has replanted his roots in Georgia. Intertwined with Sydney's, of course.

Entering their fifth year of marriage in 2025, they bought a house near Flowery Branch, where the Falcons' facility is located. They welcomed their second child, John Woerner, on April 2. And they celebrated Henry's third birthday surrounded by immediate and extended family members in their backyard.

"The big things get documented," Charlie said. "It's the little things we missed."

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GRAY MATTER:

INTO THE MIND AND TEACHINGS OF JERRY GRAY

FROM HIS PLAYING DAYS TO HIS DECADES AS A COACH IN THE LEAGUE, GRAY DETAILS HOW HE VALUES THE ART OF VISUALIZATION IN HIS TEACHINGS.

STORY BY: TORI MCELHANEY

"What do you see?"

Four words. One question.

This is the foundation of Jerry Gray's coaching philosophy.

The Falcons' assistant head coach/defense has seen it all. A Hall of Fame college career, an All-Pro professional stint and nearly three decades of accrued coaching has allowed Gray to experience everything the evolving game of football has to offer.

It's one thing to play the game for yourself, to see it unfold before your eyes. However, it's something else entirely to coach, to pass the game on to the next generation of players.

Which brings us to the question: "What do you see?"

Despite his years of experience and plays made at every level, Gray says often that it doesn't really matter what he sees, now does it? It matters what his players see. It's why he puts so much emphasis on perfecting the art of visualization in his coaching.

Coaching, at its core, is teaching.

The basis of Gray's best and most practiced teaching method manifested for him when he was just a young player; years before he was a first-round draft pick and well before a coaching career was ever in his sights.

Before he could teach his players about the art of visualization, Gray had to first be taught the art himself.

Jerry Gray was 18 years old, sitting in a team meeting during the early days of his freshman year at the University of Texas. It was the early '80s, and then-head coach Fred Akers had invited his old friend Lou Tice to speak to his team before the season began.

Tice was the founder of the Pacific Institute and specialized in the science of cognitive psychology, the study of how people think, learn and process information. He spent decades teaching others about the art of visualization, detailing in seminars and classes the power of visualizing success before it actually happens.

Tice's students included sports figures and company founders, but also generals, pilots and Navy men and women. Gray took special note of the latter group when he was younger, feeling as though he was learning something from someone who helped others "strategize to go to war." A fitting analogy seeing as the football field was his own battle ground.

When Gray was a freshman, he sat and listened to Tice. At the time, though, he didn't take too terribly much from that first lesson. But Tice kept coming back to Texas. Again and again he was there, through every offseason Gray was with the Longhorns. And each time, Tice would break down the game. He'd give the athletes tips and tools to help with their own practice of visualization while also strategizing ways to pick up player tendencies.

Gray found value in this method of powering the brain before the body. It became a factor in the standout playing career he would ultimately have, which included 297 career tackles, 16 interceptions and 20 passes broken up while playing on four bowl teams at Texas before accumulating 28 career interceptions en route to four Pro Bowl nods at the professional level.

"The brain is a lot more powerful than you give it credit for," Gray explained. "You can create a negative in your brain that's not even there, or you can create a positive in your brain that's not there, either. So, he taught us how to create positive stuff in our brain."

Today, this is a teaching Gray passes on, and every week follows the same routine that reinforces this method.

It starts in the film room.

Gray flips off the lights in the Falcons secondary's meeting room, cuts on the film and hits play. He doesn't watch the screen, though. He's already done so. He watches his players, instead.

He sees their eyes follow the players on the screen. He notices their hands jotting down notes. Every now and again Gray will

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pipe up with a note or two. If he says something three times, it better get written down. Chances are high Gray's note about a tendency shows up on game day.

Throughout the session, Gray often asks, "What do you see?"

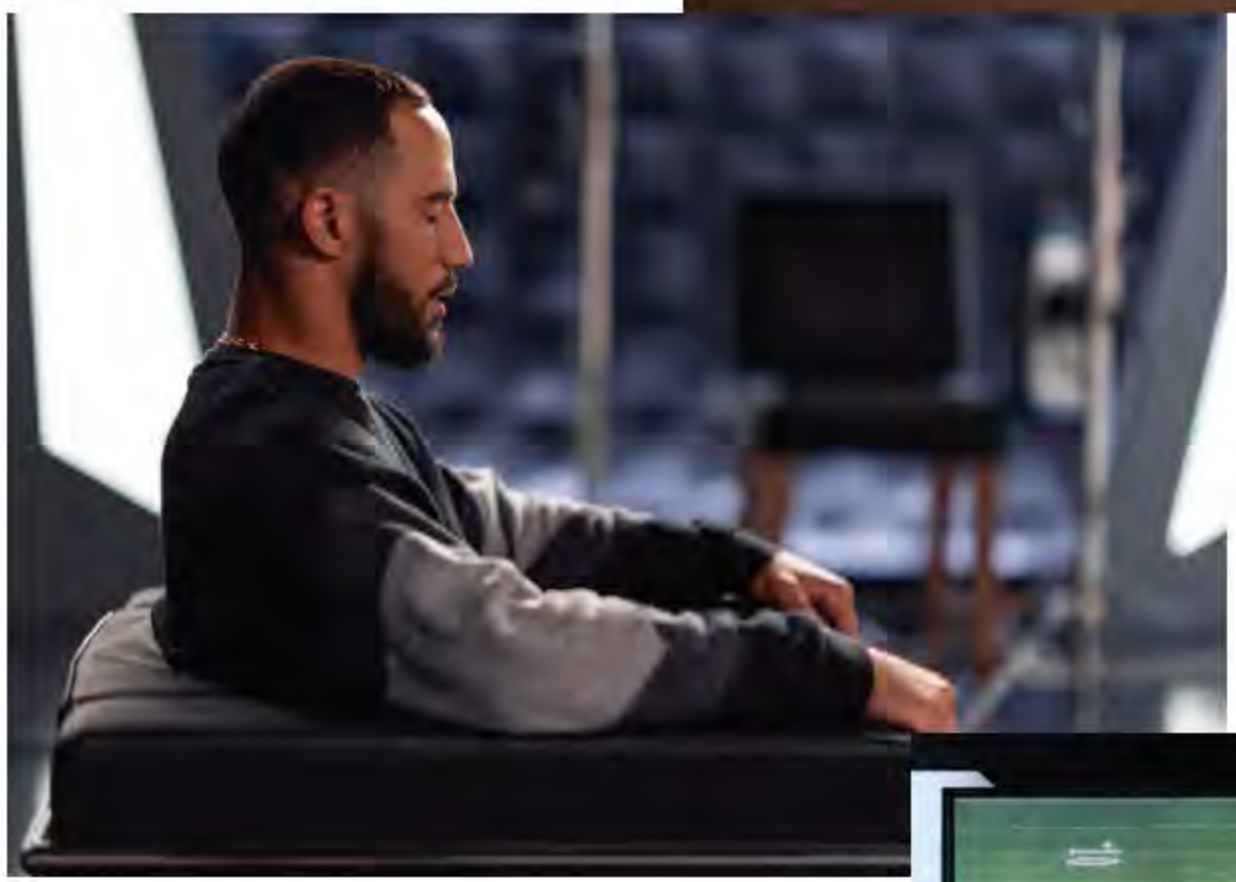
Once the session is over comes the next step: visualization.

"Now you take that film, and you take your notes, and then you put yourself in the film," Gray said.

"Superimpose yourself to see yourself making the play."

The brain is a powerful tool, but it's also a finicky one. Players like Justin Simmons and Jessie Bates III agree, so much so that they firmly believe the brain doesn't know the difference between a mental and physical rep. Gray believes in this, too.

So, the idea is that before the body plays on Sunday, the mind has already repped the game plan multiple times, creating neural pathways in the brain that are needed to execute those plays in real life. According to Gray, it's the difference



in the goods versus the greats.

"Some players, they wait until Sunday to try to make great plays," he said. "But I tell them, 'If you go Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and you make those plays in the chair, you will make the plays on Sunday, too.'"

For players, these sessions are invaluable.

"I think being able to sit back and dissect film with an All-Pro, Pro Bowler, who's gotten interceptions, who knows how to set plays up, knows what it feels like, what it looks like, I think that — to me — has been such a joy to be around," Simmons said.

The defensive backs in Atlanta have given Gray a nickname. They call him "OG." The original. And if you ever hear anyone in the Falcons secondary address Gray, they exclusively address him as "OG." It's a sign of respect for what he's seen and what he teaches them.

"He's very old school," Mike Hughes said. "But the visualization, it really relates to me because when I'm watching film, that's all I imagine myself doing: making plays.

"He's seen everything, from his playing days to his coaching days, he knows how to verbalize things to make it super simple."

That's a major piece of the players' respect for Gray and his methods. He has a player's eye in the body of a coach, Bates explained. It's why it matters to Gray — and his pupils — that he asks them what they see.

"He wants to hear the feedback from us to figure out the best solution for us as a DB group," Bates said. "... Those meetings are some of the best meetings that I've been in where it's not, 'We're just doing it this way and that's the only way we can do it.' He's super open to hearing how we see it so we can all get on the same page.

"It's very valuable, that wisdom that's coming from OG."

But despite the emphasis on visualization in film study, it doesn't stop in the video room. The first question Gray asks players as they come off the field after every defensive series on Sundays is the exact same.

"What did you see?"

"If they can explain to me what they saw, then I can help them," Gray said. "But if you can't explain what you saw, then it's going to be hard for me to help you."

The tools the players need to make the plays on the field are already safely stored in their own heads. Sometimes they just need a little help getting the brain unlocked. That's what Gray is there for. It's something he specializes in.

"He's one of the best I have been around," Simmons said of Gray. "First of all, I have tremendous respect for all coaches, especially in the NFL ... but I have the utmost and ultimate respect for those who have played before. They understand. They know what it looks like. They know what it's supposed to be like. Jerry is the epitome of that."

Through the art of visualization, Gray is molding the minds of the Falcons secondary, teaching them that success begins in the mind long before it happens on the field. He's doing so four words and one question at a time.

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HOW DRAKE LONDON'S

'DIRTY WORK' ELEVATES ATLANTA'S OFFENSE

THE ATLANTA FALCONS HAVE A LONG AND STORIED HISTORY AT WIDE RECEIVER, BUT THEY HAVEN'T BEFORE DEPLOYED A PLAYE QUITE LIKE DRAKE LONDON.

STORY BY: WILL MCFADDEN

The Atlanta Falcons have a long and storied history at wide receiver, but they haven't before deployed a player quite like Drake London.

London combines an athletic basketball background with a hard-edged approach to physicality. That has allowed him to become one of the best contested-catch specialists in the game, and yet, London's importance in Atlanta goes further than his ability to haul in tough grabs.

"He can be a dirty work guy," Falcons assistant general manager Kyle Smith said. "Which, obviously, as you're building a team, building an offense, it's not always easy. And guys like Drake can make the dirty pretty easy at times."

London has started 48 games for the Falcons over three seasons and has 3,042 yards with 15 touchdown catches. However, the physicality of the 6-foot-4, 213-pound receiver has been an important factor in other facets of the offense.

Atlanta's running backs had the highest success rate of any team in the league last season. According to Next Gen Stats, the Falcons had a successful play on 49.1% of carries by their running backs. While that may not seem like a stat that provides any indication of a wide receiver's worth, London actually plays a big role as a key blocker.

"I mean, he's just a dog. When you send Drake in there to go get people, he goes and get them," Falcons head coach Raheem Morris said. "And I was having a fun conversation with our staff the other day about, realistically, he's at the focal point of our run game about 90% of the time, for the most part.

"Being a Z, motion into it, inserting, doing some of the dirty work. But at the same time, he's at about 90% of our passing game, either one or two or at least three on just about most of our concepts. So, you're talking about a guy that's getting a lot of high volume in both the run and the pass game"

London played 90% of his team's offensive snaps in 2024, more than any other non-lineman on the team. Typically, players of London's stature occupy the position of X receiver in an offense, the same role once held by Julio Jones and Roddy White in Atlanta. Smaller, and typically more agile receivers, like Calvin Ridley or Harry Douglas, would play Z receiver.

However, modern NFL offenses are beginning to break away from those traditional stereotypes in favor of promoting a player's versatility. Morris and Falcons offensive coordinator Zac Robinson were in Los Angeles in 2023 when the Rams first began to utilize rookie fifth-round pick Puka Nacua in a similar way to how Atlanta used London last year.

Like London, Nacua's tenacity in the run game allows him to not only stay on the field but operate from different alignments and against different matchups. The creative ways in which the Rams used Nacua allowed him to break multiple rookie receiving records, including total catches (105) and yards (1,486).

"It's about matchups," Smith explained when asked about the benefits of moving a receiver inside. "... There are certain wideouts that they're outside guys only, which is good if you can beat the No. 1 corner that you're covering. Sometimes there's corners that travel with players, but they won't travel inside because of the nickel position, as we've talked about, there's so many different things that go into being a nickel. So that's a way to utilize your best receiver ... you can always find the matchup that's advantageous to you."

When the Falcons found a matchup they liked for London, they didn't hesitate to go after it.

According to Next Gen Stats, London had the highest target rate (34.9%) of any receiver last season with at least 150 routes run from the slot. He caught 45 passes for 555 yards from that alignment, the sixth-most in the NFL.

"Never, never satisfied with what he's done or did," fellow Falcons receiver Ray-Ray McCloud said. "He always wants to get better, even if he catches the ball and the route wasn't good and it was an excellent play, he's angry about it."

While players like Ladd McConkey and Jayden Reed, who gained 901 yards and 594 yards from the slot, respectively, did outperform London from that alignment, they don't offer nearly the same level of versatility. McConkey played from the slot on 70.4% of his snaps last season and was on the outside just 26.7% of the time. Reed, meanwhile, was in the slot 61.7% of the time and outside on 27.3% of his team's snaps.

London, however, was closer to an even split, spending 39.1% of his snaps in the slot and 58.1% out wide. This variety impacts Atlanta's passing game by varying his coverage matchups, release points and route options, which makes life hard on defenses before the ball is even snapped.

It's not enough just to go through the motions of moving a player around to achieve that inside-outside balance. The player in that role must embrace the chaos closer to the line of scrimmage. Otherwise, as Smith explained, the impact of it "becomes irrelevant almost."

Because the value of the job is cumulative.

It wouldn't be difficult for an offense to rotate a player specialized in run blocking, such as a tight end, extra linemen or big-bodied receiver, to give London a rest and add more size for the outside runs Atlanta specialized in last year. Defenses are trained to look for such substitutions as indicators of what could be coming on the next snap. Keeping a wide receiver in that role, partially shrouds an offense's intentions.

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"He's a complete player in the sense that during the run game, we don't have to hide him," Falcons quarterback Kirk Cousins said. "We use him to block people — many times, people who are bigger than him. And he throws his hat in there and doesn't back down."

London's ability as a blocker paid dividends for Atlanta's run game last season. The Falcons finished with the third-most rushing yards on runs outside of the tackles last season, plays that often involved London securing an edge. The team was also fifth in rushing yards over expectation on runs outside of the tackles.

"We got combinations with tackles, he's got combinations with tight ends, he's got a bunch of different things that he does," Morris said. "So, he's really done a nice job in our run game."

While the rushing attack has been firmly established in Atlanta, the Falcons expect the addition of Michael Penix Jr. at quarterback will elevate the passing game. With Penix behind center for three games last year, London caught 22 passes for 352 yards and two touchdowns. Extrapolated out for a full 17-game season, that rate would amount to 125 catches for 1,995 yards and 11 touchdowns.

Now, those are extremely lofty expectations for London, who had a career-best 1,271 yards and nine touchdowns in 2024. Not to mention that the NFL record for receiving yards in a season is 1,964 yards. However, the early returns with Penix and London working together were promising and bode well for their connection moving forward.

"He's a complete receiver," Penix said. "That's somebody that's gonna make plays down the field but also make plays for his teammates. And that's somebody that you want, somebody who's not selfish and willing to put his body out on the line for the guys next to him. So, we love it."

While every year brings change in the NFL, the Falcons have been slowly but surely building an offense that — they hope — is both imposing and dynamic. In London, they have a player who embodies both traits.

Debates raged before the 2022 draft about the wide receiver class. Some experts favored the electric Garrett Wilson. Others preferred the silky-smooth Chris Olave. Then, there was the camp who wanted Jameson Williams, believing speed trumped all other traits.

In Atlanta, London was the clear choice. And the Falcons are still finding ways to benefit from that decision.

"It doesn't matter what scheme you're running," Smith said, "you're going to utilize and find ways to use him."

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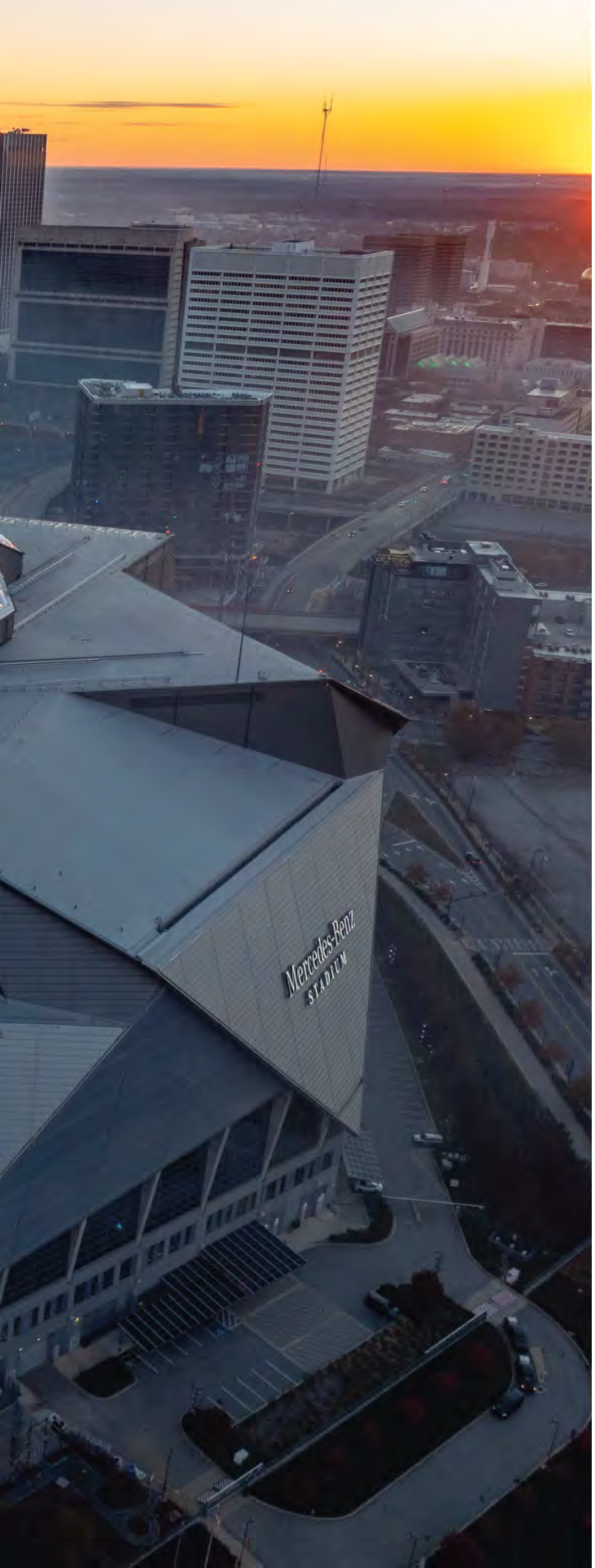

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MERCEDES-BENZ STADIUM TO HOST SUPER BOWL LXII IN 2028

The National Football League announced that Super Bowl LXII will be hosted in Atlanta in 2028, with the game played at Mercedes-Benz Stadium.

The announcement was made at the NFL Fall League Meeting in Atlanta following a review of the proposal by the NFL's Fan Engagement & Major Events Committee and a vote by full ownership.

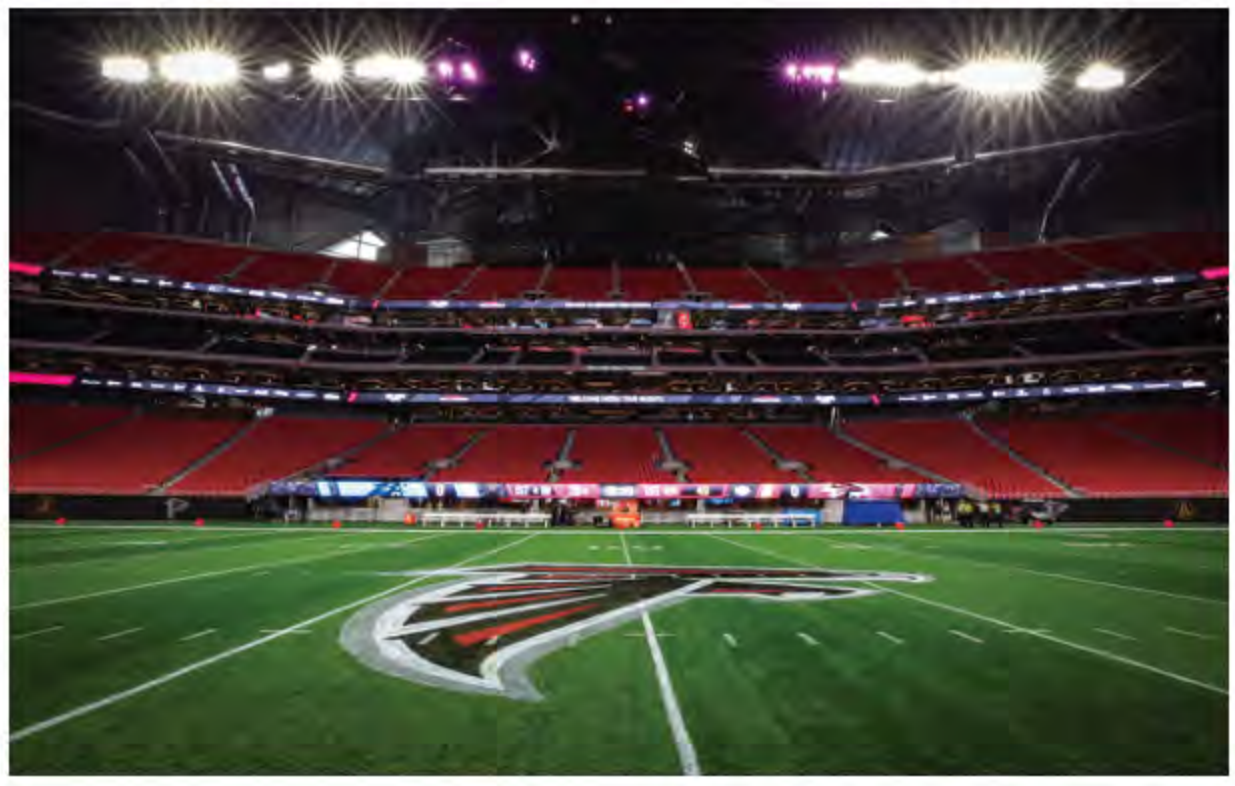
"Renowned for its hospitality and rich sports and entertainment culture, Atlanta is a world-class event destination and a natural fit for Super Bowl 62," said NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell. "Arthur Blank has been a transformative figure in the Atlanta community, playing a crucial role in leading the bid to bring the Super Bowl back to the city. I have been fortunate to witness firsthand how Arthur continues to drive community engagement and economic development in the Atlanta community through his unwavering commitment to sports and philanthropy. We look forward to working with him, the Atlanta Falcons, Atlanta Sports Council and all of our partners on the ground to create an unforgettable experience for fans around the world in 2028."

Super Bowl LXII marks the fourth time Atlanta has hosted the Big Game and the second time at Mercedes-Benz Stadium, with the most recent game hosted in 2019.

"This is a tremendous honor for the city of Atlanta and the state of Georgia to be selected as host for Super Bowl LXII," said Atlanta Falcons Owner and Chairman Arthur M. Blank. "Thank you to my fellow owners for their trust in awarding Atlanta this opportunity, and thank you to Commissioner Goodell, Peter O'Reilly and the entire league for their continued leadership in making the NFL the greatest sports league in the world. Mercedes-Benz Stadium was built to host the world's largest sporting events, and I know I speak for many when I say we are honored to bring it back to Atlanta in 2028 and build off the success of Super Bowl LIII in 2019. I look forward to working alongside our city and state officials as we continue to elevate Georgia as a premier, global sports destination."

As part of the lead-up to Super Bowl LXII, Atlanta will host a highly anticipated lineup of events, including NFL Honors, Super Bowl Experience, Super Bowl Opening Night and an expansive community program. Spanning the Atlanta metropolitan area, these events will offer countless opportunities for both residents and visitors to enjoy memorable, family-friendly experiences ahead of the Big Game.

"We are thrilled to welcome the Super Bowl back to Atlanta in 2028 for a fourth time," said Dan Corso, president, Atlanta Sports Council and Atlanta Super Bowl Bid Committee. "As we made clear throughout the process, no city is better positioned than Atlanta to host events of this magnitude. Super Bowl LXII would not be possible without the incredible cooperation of leaders in the civic and business community who continue to come together to deliver for our city and state."



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COMMUNITY

Falcons travel to Dominican Republic with Compassion International

Story By: **Atlanta Falcons Staff**

Atlanta Falcons punter Bradley Pinion recently led a group of Falcons players and associates to the Dominican Republic with Compassion International, a child development organization that partners with local churches to release children from poverty. Falcons President Greg Beadles, Head Coach Raheem Morris, seven players, plus staff and spouses, had the chance to learn more about the Compassion's ongoing efforts to lift children out of poverty. The trip marked the first that a professional sports organization has traveled as a group to take part in Compassion International's work.

"We've never done anything like this before and I'm so grateful we had this opportunity," said Beadles. "We are a values-driven organization both on and off the field, and we've always wanted to be a positive, impactful force for good in communities."

The group spent four days in the country learning about Compassion International's child

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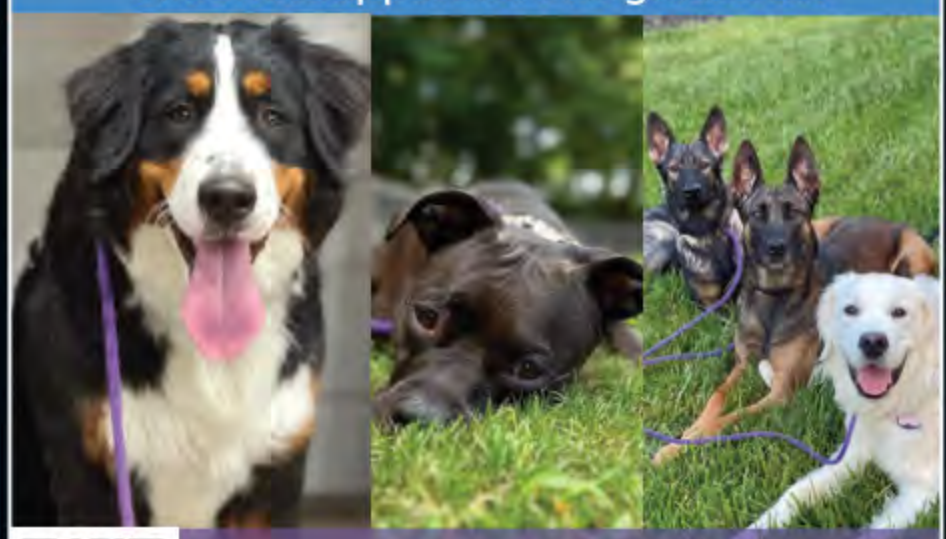

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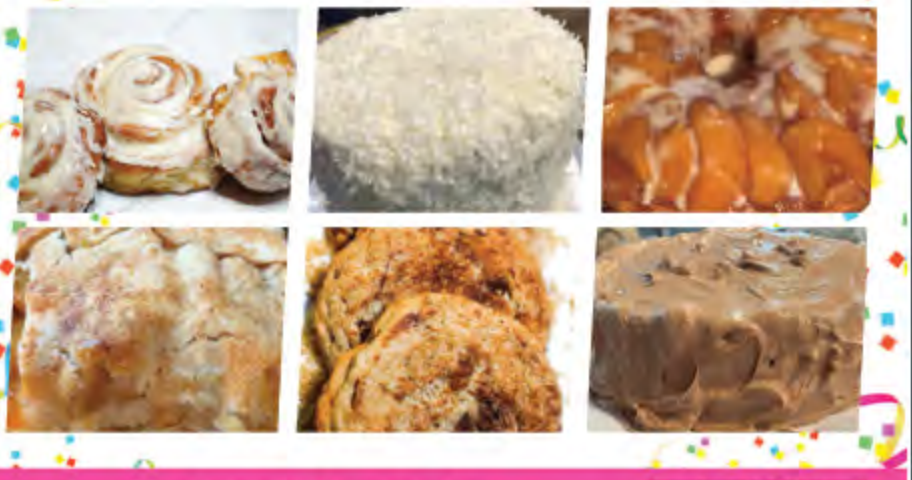

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1 year - 12 years

development initiatives. They visited front-line church partners, engaged with children through planned group activities, including a baseball game and football drills, and visited the homes of the mothers and children in need.

Through his established involvement with Compassion International, Pinion felt moved to invite his teammates and other Falcons associates to experience the work being done by Compassion, specifically in the Dominican Republic. In 2023, he and his wife, Kaeleigh, traveled to Tanzania to visit survival centers they helped fund, which provide critical prenatal care, access to food, clean water and medicine to mothers and babies in need. This experience led to his "Punts for Purpose" campaign launch in the fall of 2023, where he partnered with other punters around the league to donate $1,000 to Compassion International for every punt that landed inside of the 20-yard-line, in support of the organization's "The Fight to First" initiative.

"It's what we are passionate about," Pinion added. "We just want to bring other people along because we see the impact Compassion's having. We want other people to see it, support it and give that same fire that we have."

Through its partnership with 234 frontline church partners in the Dominican Republic, Compassion serves over 62,000 children and is working to protect them from threats such as crime and gang violence, drug activity, trafficking and exploitation. Alongside its holistic child development program, Compassion also provides age-appropriate child protection training to every child and a safe environment where children and youth can enjoy sports and other activities.

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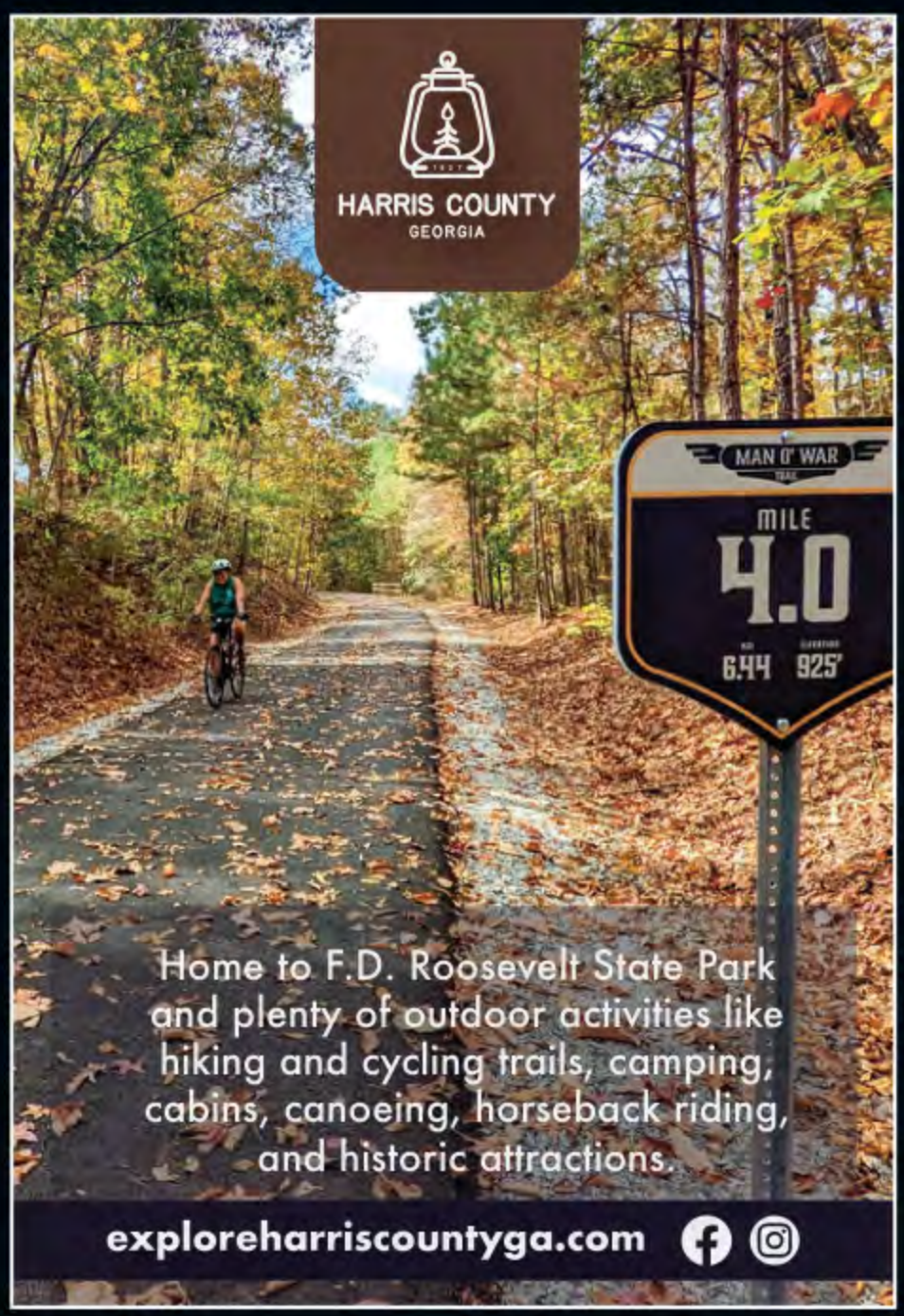

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ARTHUR M. BLANK FAMILY FOUNDATION

FURTHER SUPPORT FOR GIRLS FLAG FOOTBALL IN GEORGIA

With the support of the Atlanta Falcons and the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, more than 300 Georgia high schools will participate in girls flag football this fall. This spring, the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation provided grants to 304 Georgia high schools to either launch a girls flag football program or support an existing program for the upcoming season. In 2025, 45 Georgia high schools will launch a girls flag football program for their student athletes.

The Falcons have been at the forefront of growing girls flag football in Georgia over the past seven years, beginning with a pilot program for 19 high schools in Gwinnett County in 2018. Georgia became the fourth state to sanction girls flag football as an official high school sport in 2020, and in 2024, more than 7,000 girls participated in girls flag football at more than 270 high schools throughout Georgia.

In April, the Georgia House of Representatives unanimously passed HR 347, a bipartisan resolution sponsored by Rep. Brent Cox, Rep. Rick Jasperse, Rep. Lydia Glaize, Rep. Demetrius Douglas, Rep. Chas Cannon, Rep. Chuck Efstration and Rep. Dewey McLain, with support from Speaker Jon Burns, urging all Georgia high schools to establish flag football programs for girls. The resolution is the first piece of legislation to be passed supporting the growth of girls flag football in the country.

GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOLS – NEW GIRLS FLAG FOOTBALL PROGRAMS IN 2025

Alcovy High School
Appling County High School
Campbell High School
Cedar Grove High School
Cedartown High School
Cherokee Christian Schools
Cook County High School
Crisp County High School
Dawson County High School
Drew Charter School
Early County High School
East Forsyth High School
Eastside High School
Elbert County High School
Gainesville High School
Gilmer County High School
Habersham Central High School
Heard County High School
Irwin County High School
Johnson Ferry Christian Academy
Johnson High School (Gainesville)
Landmark Christian High School
Lovett High School
Manchester High School
Midtown High School
Mitchell County High School
Monroe High School
Montgomery County High School
Mt. Zion High School (Carrollton)
Ringgold High School
Rockmart High School
Rome High School
Stephenson High School
Stephens County High School
Stewart County High School
Tattnall County High School
Thrive Christian Academy
Thomasville High School
Turner County High School
Twiggs County High School
Washington-Wilkes High School
Weber School
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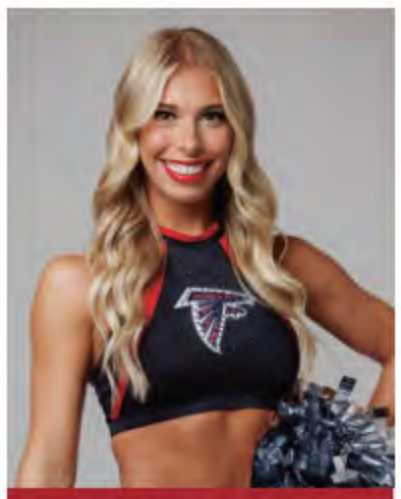
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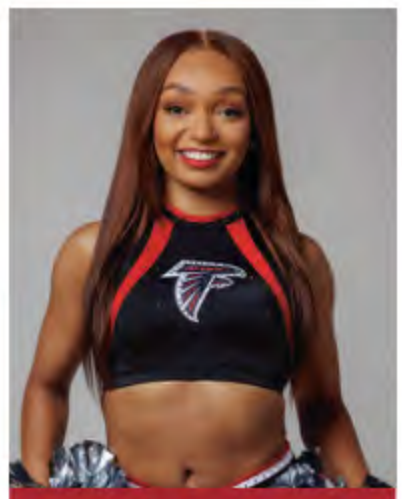
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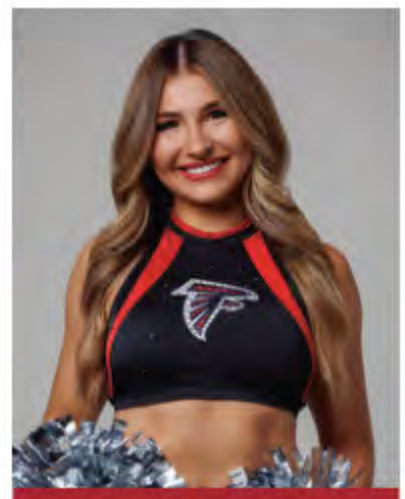
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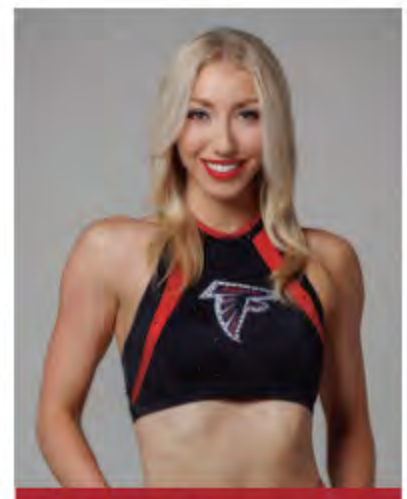
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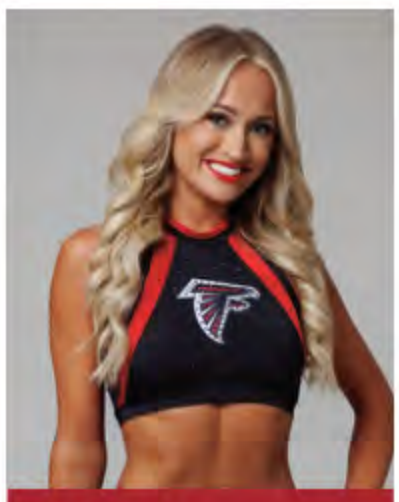
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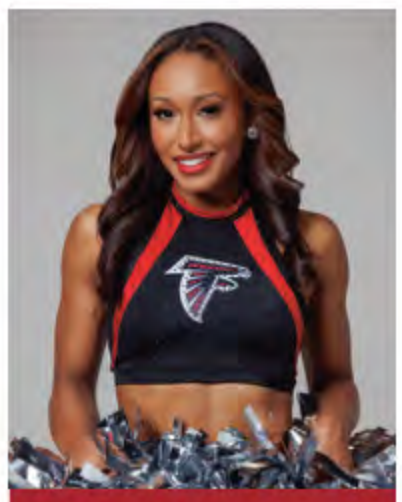
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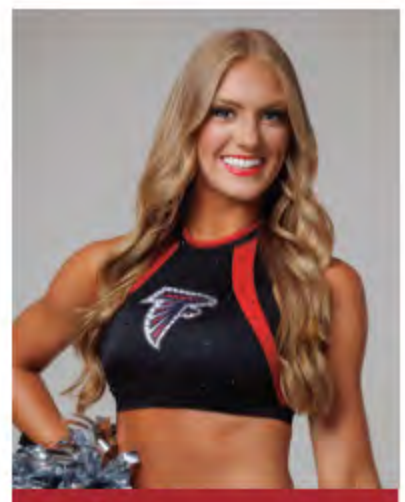
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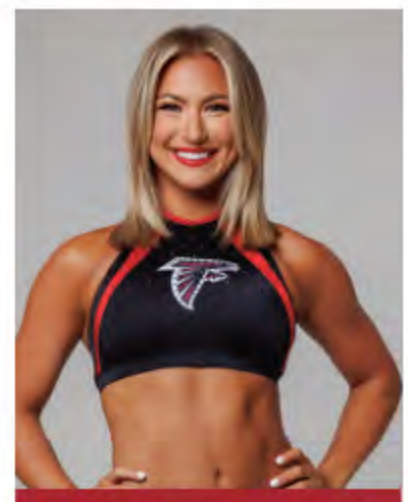
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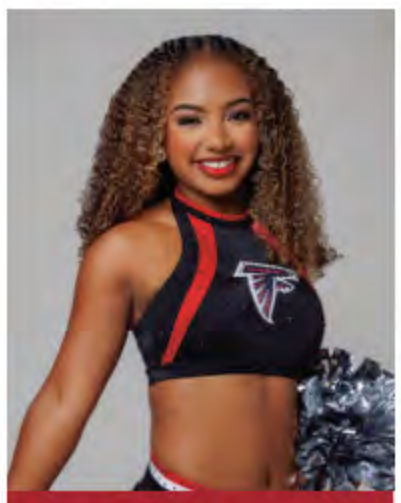
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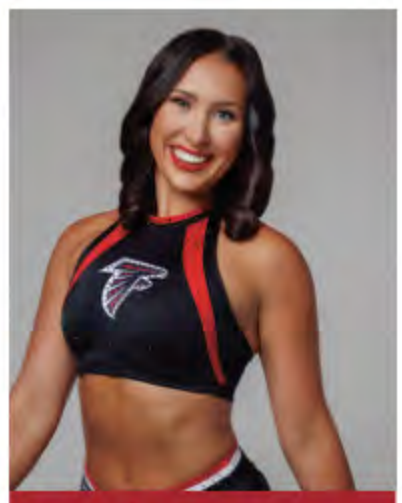
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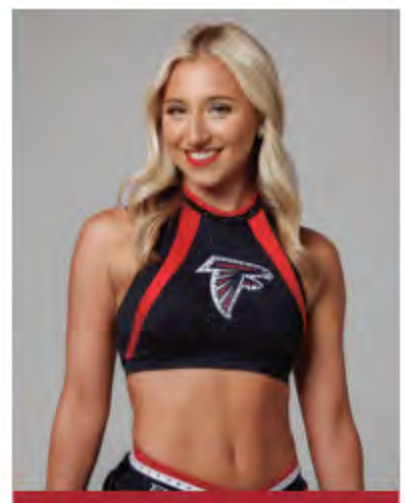
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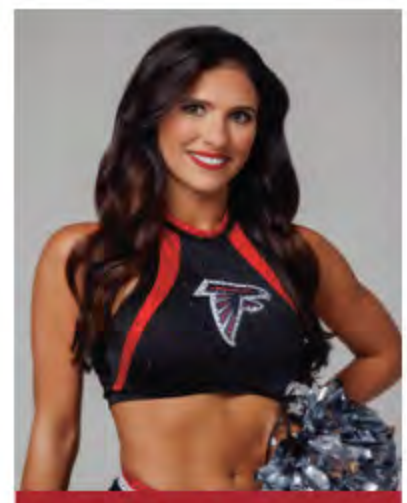
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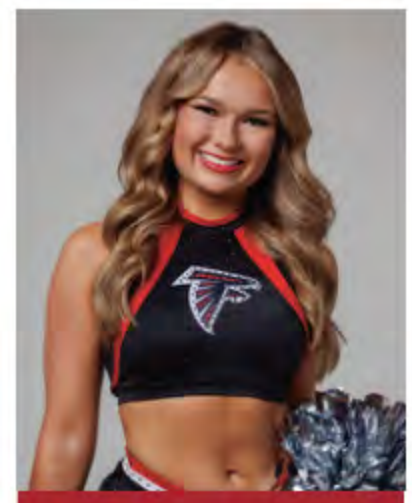
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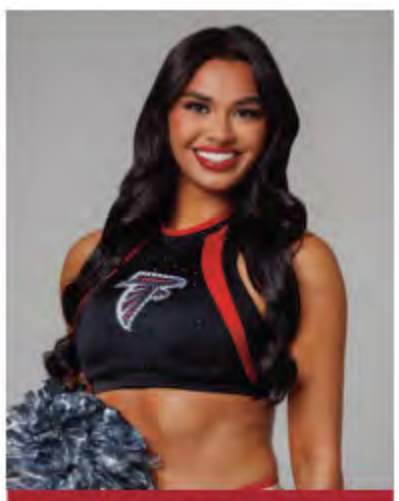
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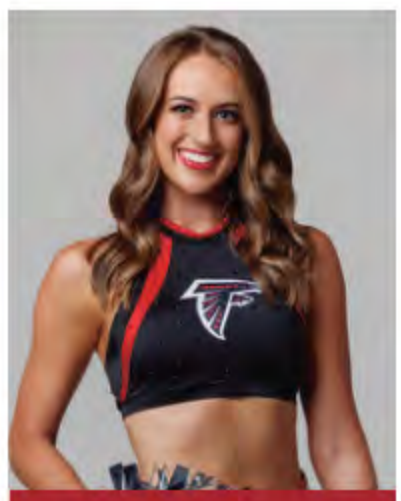
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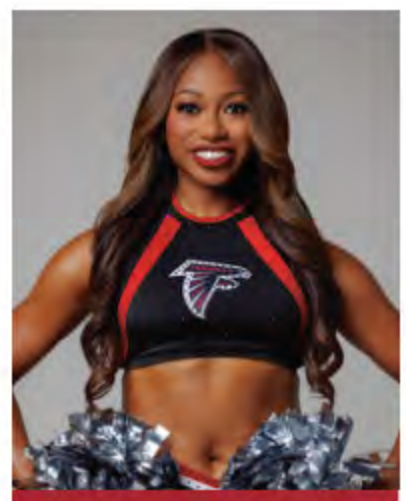
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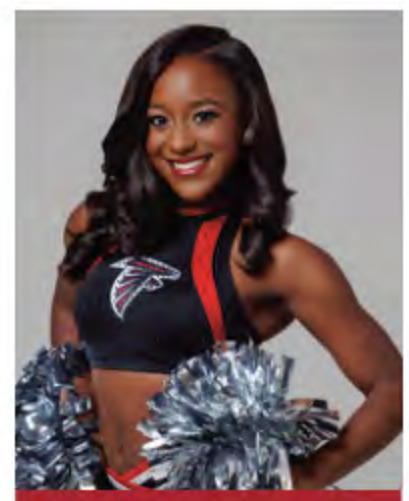
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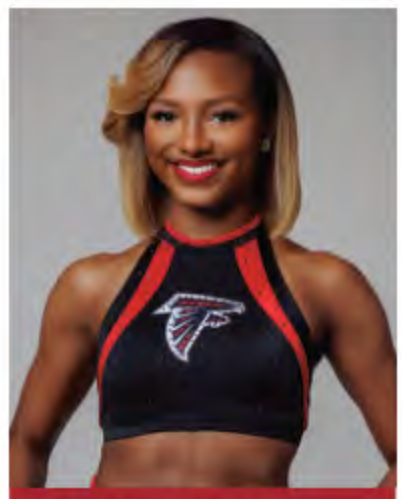
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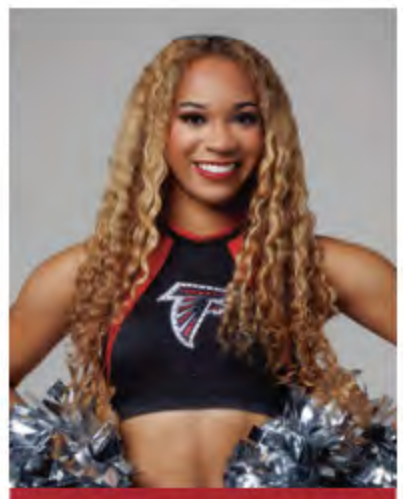
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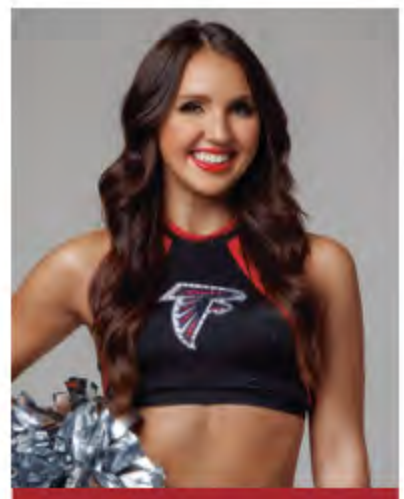
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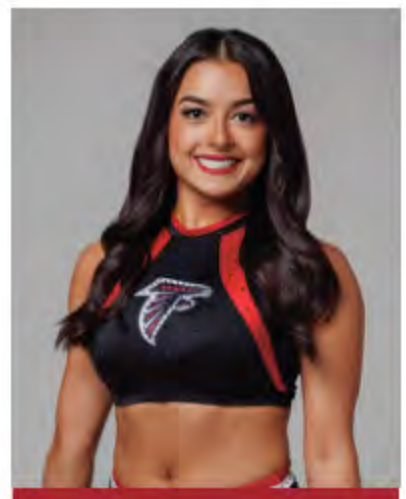
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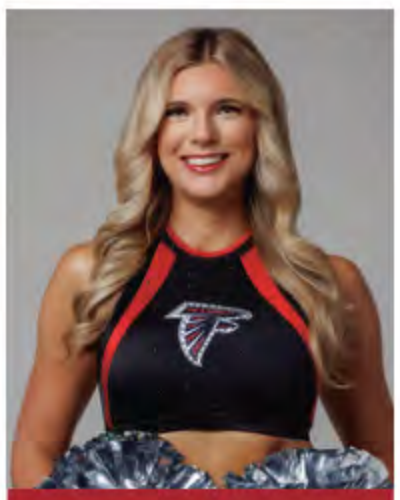
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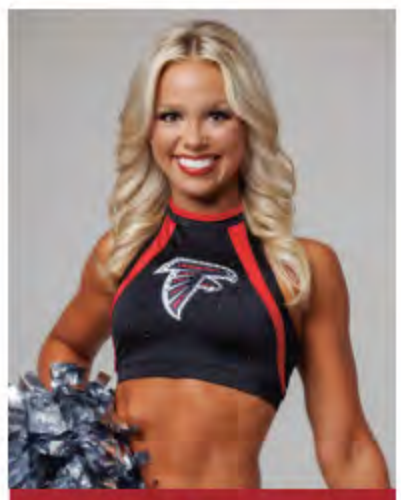
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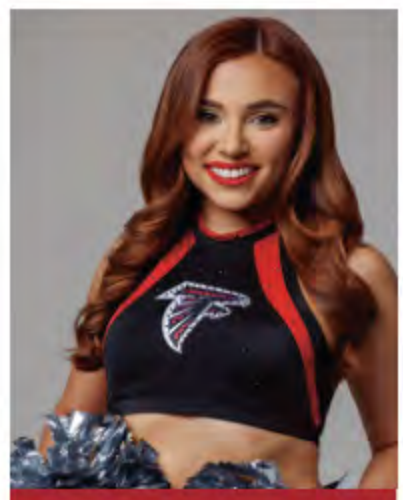
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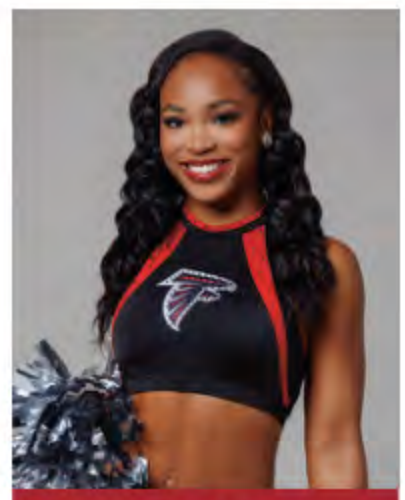
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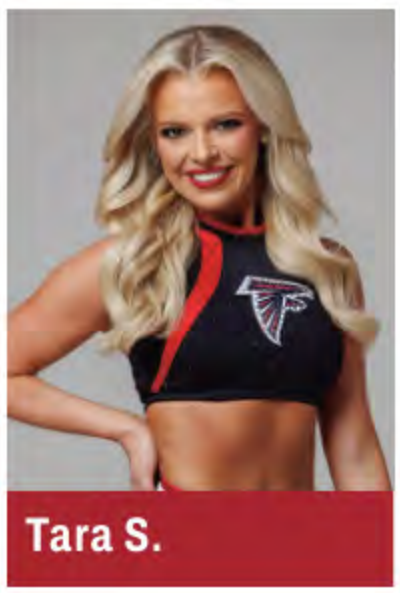
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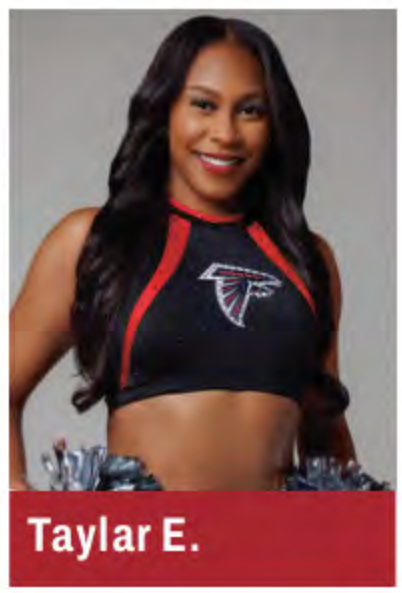
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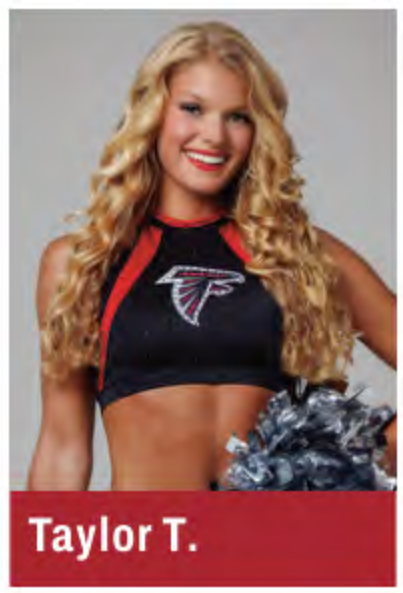
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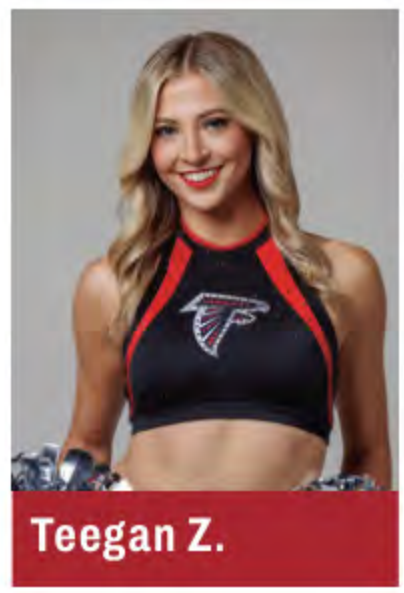
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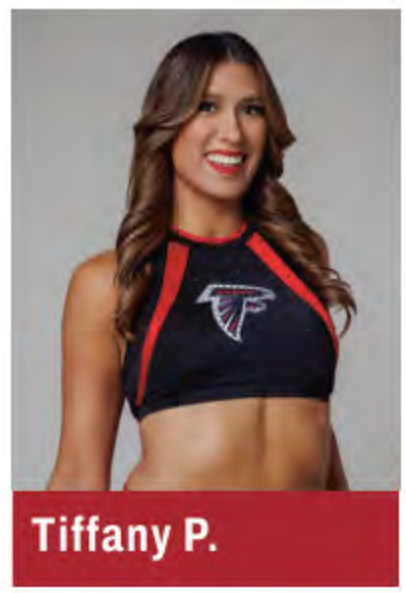
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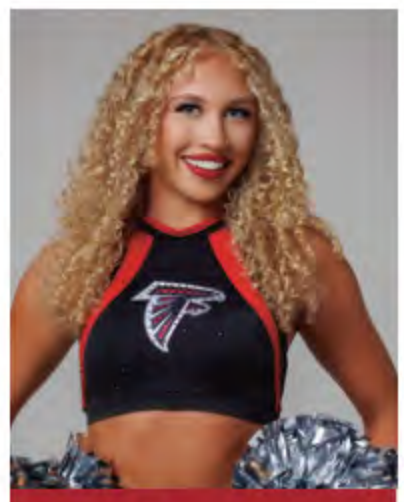
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2004 INAUGURAL INDUCTEES

WILLIAM ANDREWS – RUNNING BACK

A third-round pick, William Andrews was among the NFL's elite runners when a shocking knee injury prematurely ended his career. He became just the second running back in NFL history to have two 2,000-yard (combined yards) seasons (the only other player prior to Williams was O.J. Simpson).

William Andrews

When he had his first 2,000-yard year, he joined just four other backs who had done so (Jim Brown, Walter Payton, Wilbert Montgomery and Simpson). In his first five seasons in the NFL (1979–83), Andrews outgained every other back in the entire NFL. The bullish Andrews had 8,382 total yards in those five years (an average of 1,677 per year) to lead all NFL runners.

Andrews set 19 Falcons club records that began in his very first NFL game in 1979 when he ran for 167 yards in a game at New Orleans where he totaled 189 yards. He was selected to the Pro Bowl in 1980, 1981, 1982 and 1983 and made the NFL All-Rookie team in 1979. He retired in 1987.

Steve Bartkowski

STEVE BARTKOWSKI – QUARTERBACK

Steve Bartkowski was the No. 1 overall draft pick in 1975, he was named the NFL's Rookie of the Year after throwing for 1,662 yards and 15 touchdowns. He set every team record in passing, which included 23,468 career yards and 154 touchdown passes in 123 games.

He produced three seasons of 3,000 yards or more passing, 12 games of more than 300 yards passing and two seasons of 30 or more touchdown passes. Bartkowski collected over 50 victories as a starting quarterback for the Falcons and guided the team to their first playoff victory in franchise history over the Philadelphia Eagles in 1978.

TOMMY NOBIS – LINEBACKER

The first–ever player drafted by the Atlanta Falcons for the inaugural 1966 season, Tommy Nobis quickly became the first–ever Falcons player to be voted to the Pro Bowl after being selected as a rookie. The stellar middle linebacker was named the NFL Rookie of the Year for his efforts. "Mr. Falcon" led the team in tackles in nine of his 11 seasons, while earning five trips to the Pro Bowl.

Tommy Nobis

In a poll conducted in 1970 by ABC to pick the best athlete of the decade of the 1960s, running back O.J. Simpson was number one and Tommy Nobis was number two in the entire country. He had an astronomical 294 total combined tackles as a rookie, still the team's club record. Nobis also intercepted 11 passes during his pro career, returning two for touchdowns. His uniform, No. 60, has been worn by only him during the team's existence. He retired in 1976.

JESSIE TUGGLE – LINEBACKER

Jessie Tuggle came to the Falcons as an undrafted free agent in 1987 and retired in August of 2001 as one of the all-time greatest players in franchise history. Nicknamed, "The Hammer", for his bone- jarring tackles, Tuggle is the club's all-time leader in total tackles with 2,065 and enjoyed 12 straight 100-tackle seasons.

He led the team in tackles in a season 10 times and amassed 20 or more tackles in a single-game on four occasions with a personal– best of 24 stops. His 14 seasons played, 189 career starts and 209 total games played are third–most ever in Falcons history.

Tuggle's five Pro Bowl appearances (1992, 1995, 1995, 1997, 1998) stand tied for the third-most ever by a Falcons player. The Falcons honored No. 58 with "Jessie Tuggle Day" during halftime of the Falcons game vs. the Detroit Lions on December 22, 2002.

Jessie Tuggle

As a Veteran, when someone raises their hand for help, you’re often one of the first ones to respond. But it’s also okay to get help for yourself. Maybe you want or need assistance with employment, stress, finances, mental health or finding the right resources. No matter what it is, you earned it. And there’s no better time than right now to ask for it. **Don’t wait. Reach out.**

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2004 INDUCTEE

JEFF VAN NOTE – CENTER

Jeff Van Note holds Falcons team marks for most seasons played (18) and most consecutive games played (155). He is second in the team record books with 246 games played and 225 games started.

Van Note originally came to the Falcons as a linebacker from Kentucky but was moved to center by head coach Norm Van Brocklin and eventually earned the starting job at center in 1970. He earned the first of his six Pro Bowl berths in 1974. Van Note is tied with Claude Humphrey for most Pro Bowl appearances by a Falcons player with six. He retired in 1986.

Jeff Van Note

2008 INDUCTEES

MIKE KENN – OFFENSIVE TACKLE

Mike Kenn was a mainstay on the Falcons offensive line aas the Michigan alum holds Falcons records in most games played and started (251) while ranking second in most seasons played with Atlanta (17).

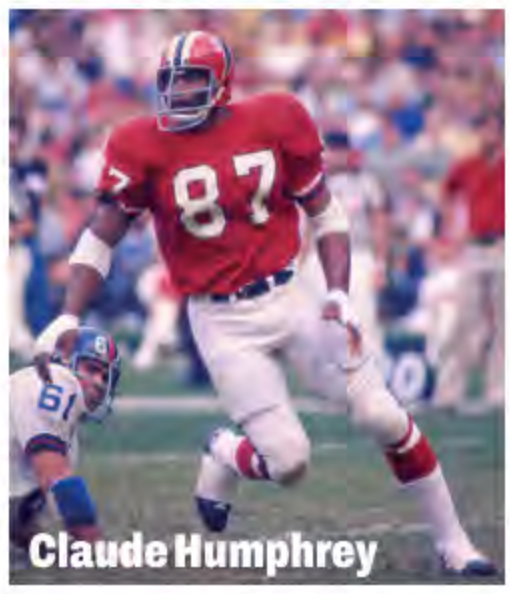
Kenn also posted a streak of 94 consecutive games played and earned Pro Bowl selections from 1980-84.

Mike Kenn

CLAUDE HUMPHREY – DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

Claude Humphrey was a first round pick by the Falcons in the 1968 NFL Draft and completed his career as the all-time sack leader in franchise history with 94.5. Humphrey also ranks third in Atlanta annals with 15.6 sacks in a single season.

He is tied for the franchise lead with six Pro Bowl selections including five straight from 1970-74.


Claude Humphrey

2010 INDUCTEE

DEION SANDERS – CORNERBACK

Deion Sanders was a three-time Pro Bowl starter during his Falcons career after being selected as the fifth overall player in the 1989 draft out of Florida State. Considered one of the best pure cornerbacks ever to lace up a pair of cleats, Sanders also doubled as a dangerous return man. He was recently tabbed the 34th best player in the history of the League by a new NFL Films-produced series, The Top 100: NFL's Greatest Players. Sanders' Falcons career started in memorable fashion as he returned a punt 68 yards for a touchdown in his first NFL game as a rookie against the Los Angeles Rams at Fulton County Stadium.

Sanders' All-Rookie season also included him leading all first-year defensive backs with five interceptions and becoming the first Falcons player to ever appear on the cover of Sports Illustrated (on Nov. 13, 1989).

During his productive Falcons career from 1989-93, "Prime Time" established 12 club records for such marks as: most interceptions for touchdowns (2), longest punt return (79t yards), most punt return touchdowns (2), most KOR yards (3,063), most KOR touchdowns (3), longest kickoff return (100t), most combined return touchdowns (8), and most combined return yards (3,967), among others. The electrifying Sanders scored a total of 10 touchdowns in a Falcons uniform on five returns, three interceptions, and two receptions.

Deion Sanders

Gerald Riggs

2013 INDUCTEE

GERALD RIGGS – RUNNING BACK

Gerald Riggs was selected by the Falcons as the ninth overall pick in the 1982 NFL Draft out of Arizona State. He was a three-time Pro Bowler in his seven seasons in Atlanta and finished his Falcons career as the franchise's all-time rushing leader with 6,631 rushing yards.

Riggs tallied 48 career touchdowns, which puts him second in team history in terms of rushing touchdowns and fifth in overall touchdowns. Riggs' name litters the Falcons record books as he was one of the most prolific rushers of his time.

2017 INDUCTEE

WARRICK DUNN – RUNNING BACK

Warrick Dunn signed with the Falcons as a free agent in 2002 and spent six seasons with the team. During his time in Atlanta, Dunn gained 5,981 rushing yards – fourth-most in Falcons history – and 30 touchdowns while averaging 4.2 yards per carry.

He caught 204 passes during his career with the Falcons – second-most among running backs in franchise history – for 1,635 yards – third-most among Atlanta running backs – and six touchdowns. From 2004-06, Dunn had three consecutive 1,000-yard rushing seasons, including his lone Pro Bowl year with the Falcons in 2005.

Warrick Dunn

Dunn became part of NFL history in 2006, when he and quarterback Michael Vick became the first running back-quarterback duo to rush for 1,000 yards, apiece. In 2009, Dunn became a limited partner of the Falcons.

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Roddy White

2019 INDUCTEE

RODDY WHITE – WIDE RECEIVER

Roddy White, the 11th member of the Falcons Ring of Honor, was selected by the Atlanta Falcons in the first round of the 2005 NFL Draft. White spent all 11 seasons of his NFL career with the Falcons, ending his run as the all-time leading receiver in franchise history. In that time, White caught 808 passes for 10,863 yards and 63 touchdowns.

An All-Pro and four-time Pro Bowler, White gained at least 1,000 receiving yards in six straight seasons beginning in 2007. His best year came in 2010, when White caught 115 passes for 1,389 yards and 10 touchdowns.

Todd McClure

2022 INDUCTEE

TODD MCCLURE – CENTER

McClure was a pillar of stability, class and sustained success at an important, yet often overlooked position. He played 13 NFL seasons, all in Atlanta, with 195 starts in 198 games. He also set a franchise record for starting 144 straight between 2001-2010.

McClure blocked for three 1,000-yard rushers, helping those guys reach four figures over the course of six seasons. He also helped both quarterback Mike Vick and running back Warrick Dunn exceed 1,000 yards in 2006.

2024 INDUCTEES

ARTHUR M. BLANK – OWNER & CHAIRMAN

As the 13th member of the Atlanta Falcons Ring of Honor, Falcons Owner and Chairman, Arthur M. Blank, has made his mark as a renowned steward of the franchise. After purchasing the team in 2002, results on and off the field elevated, and Blank's unwavering dedication to the franchise, its fans and the city brought stability and a renewed vision to the Falcons that has stood the test of time. Blank has championed using the Falcons and NFL platforms to grow youth football, support America's military and build community.

Recipient of Sports Business Journal's 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award, Blank redefined the fan experience, and in his first season as owner, Falcons attendance at the Georgia Dome rose to nearly 69,000 fans per game, going from 30th in the league to 11th. After playing in the Dome for 25 years, Blank's

Arthur M. Blank

vision of a world-class venue for Atlanta and home to the Falcons came to life when Mercedes-Benz Stadium (MBS) opened its doors in 2017.

As of 2024, under Blank's leadership, the Falcons have earned eight postseason berths, including trips to the NFC Championship Game in 2004, 2012 and 2016, three NFC South Division crowns and a trip to Super Bowl LI.

Matt Ryan

MATT RYAN – QUARTERBACK

Matt Ryan's imprint on the Falcons is unmistakable. He will forever be linked to the franchise after lifting it from one of its lowest points to some of its highest moments. Ryan spent 14 seasons in Atlanta, leading the Falcons to the postseason five times including two NFC Championship Games and one Super Bowl appearance.

Ryan set franchise records for career passing yards (59,735), attempts (8,003), completions (5,242), passing touchdowns (367), passer rating (94.6), completion percentage (65.5) and 300-yard games (73). Ryan also set a litany of single-game and single-season records during his time with the Falcons. He led Atlanta to a 120-102 (.541) regular season record and missed just three games over his career with the club.

Selected with the third-overall pick in the 2008 NFL Draft out of Boston College, Ryan made an immediate impact on the Falcons. After finishing the 2007 season with a 4-12 record, Atlanta was in a difficult position that many believed would take years to recover from. Enter Ryan, who tossed a 60-yard touchdown pass to Michael Jenkins on his first NFL pass attempt and led the club to its first postseason birth since 2004.

He was named offensive rookie of the year by both the Associated Press and the Pro Football Writers of America. Ryan went on to earn four Pro Bowl selections (2010, 2012, 2014, 2016), first-team All-Pro honors and offensive player of the year (2016). He also became the first player in franchise history to be named NFL MVP, earning the prestigious award after leading Atlanta to an NFC Championship and and appearance in Super Bowl LI.

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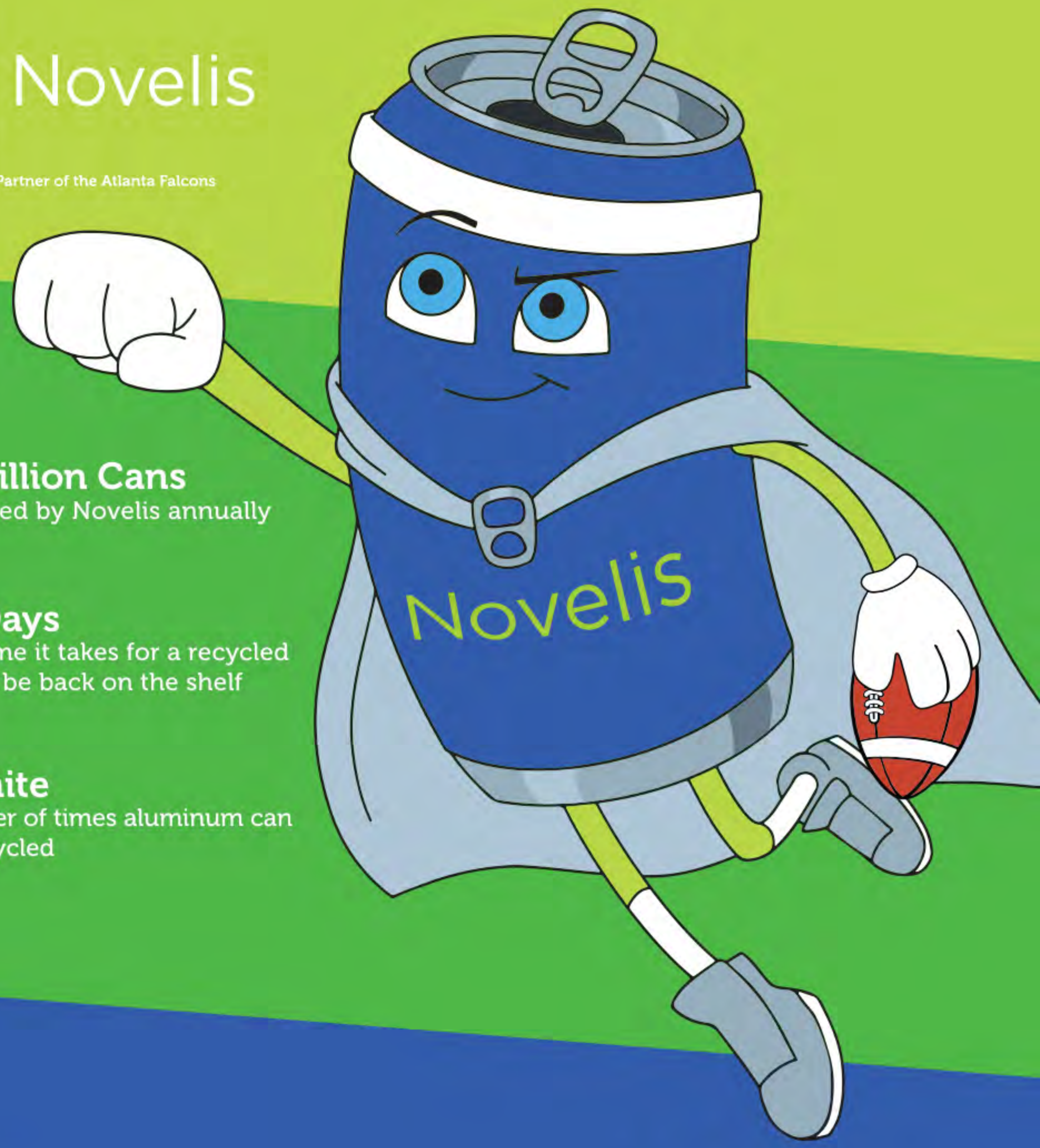

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